JESUS
AND THE
RESURRECTION
Justified by
Witnesses
IN
HEAVEN
AND IN
EARTH.

In Two Parts.

The First shewing That *Jesus* is the SON OF GOD; the Second, That in him we have ETERNALL LIFE.

By SYMON PATRICK, D. D.
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

Ὅταν ὁ Θεὸς τι ποιῇ, λογισμῶν οὐκ ἔστι χρεία. S. Chrysost. in *Johan. Hom.* lxvii.

Printed for *R. Royston.* MDCLXXVII.

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THE Witneſſes TO CHRISTIANITY.

The Resurrection of Iesus.

Mat 28 2 And behold there was a great earthquake: for the Angel of the Lord descended from heaven & came & rolled back ye stone from the doore, and sate upon it. And for feare of him the keepers did shake, & became as dead men. And the Angel sayd unto the woman, Fear not ye, for I know, that ye seek Iesus, that was crucified. He is not here for he is Risen, as he sayd.

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THE WITNESSES TO CHRISTIANITY;

OR,

The Certainty of our *FAITH* and *HOPE:*

In a Discourse upon

1 S. JOHN v. 7, 8.

BY

SYMON PATRICK, D.D.

Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty.

LONDON,

Printed for *R. Royston,* Bookseller to His most Sacred Majesty, at the *Angel* in *Amen-Corner,* 1675.

TO

The most Reverend Father in God,

GILBERT,

By Divine Providence, Lord Archbishop of

CANTERBURY,

Primate of all *England*, and Metropolitan; and one of his Majesties most Honourable Privy Council, *&c.*

May it please Your Grace

TO permit these Papers to go abroad under your Name, which are writ in defence of that most holy Religion, of which your *Grace* is the prime Minister in this Kingdom. They contain an explication but of a very few words; yet in them lies the whole Evidence for the Christian Cause. I hope I have done something to clear their sence,

and to illuſtrate divers other paſſages in the holy Books. I have, at leaſt, done my endeavour, and opened the way to the plaineſt and moſt Apoſtolical method of aſſerting the truth of our Religion. They that come after may ſupply the defects, and rectifie the miſtakes, which they find in this account that I have given of the Witneſſes to Chriſtianity. Who ſpeak ſo fully and with ſuch Authority, that it is a matter of juſt wonder there ſhould be any Infidels in Chriſtian Countries.

We can find no other cauſe of it, but that inſtead of conſidering upon what grounds our Faith relies, they ſcornfully preſume that it hath none. If they would but lay aſide their lightneſs, and become ſerious, and if they would be ſo humble as to think it is poſſible they may learn of one of the deſpiſed Miniſters of *Jeſus* Chriſt; I doubt not they would, with a little ſtudy, ſoon ſee him to be ſo great a Lord, that they ought to have a due reſpect to the meaneſt of his Servants,

vants, for his ſake. Nay, they would not envy to them ſuch high Dignities, as your *Grace* worthily holds in the Church of Chriſt. For the Lord himſelf is honoured, in the honour that is done to his Miniſters. And thereby they are made capable to do him ſtill better ſervice; and with the more authority to promote the honour of his Religion.

Of which how much your Grace hath deſerved, by your prudent care and vigilance for its preſervation, and by the countenance and encouragement you give to thoſe that labour in its ſervice; poſterity perhaps may be better judges than this preſent Age. Though that cannot be ſo ungrateful as not to acknowledge your great Munificence and Bounty; of which there are ſuch publick and laſting Monuments, as declare you to be *Primate of all England*, not only in the dignity of your Office, but, which is more, in the generoſity of your Spirit.

Long may our *Soveraign* enjoy such a wise Counsellor, the *Church* such a Prudent Governour, *Learning* such a liberal Patron and Benefactor, and when through mere Age you must resign and exchange it for a higher and better place, your *See* such a Successor.

As for my self, if your *Grace* will be pleased to pardon this Address, and reckon me in the number of those, that reverence your Vertues as well as your Greatness, I shall not doubt but my Design in this Work will obtain your *Graces* approbation; and that your known Candor will pass a favourable Judgment upon the weak endeavours of

the Churches and Your Graces
affectionate Servant,

ST. PATRICK.

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PAge 635. line 15. read, *ſignifies that ſort.* p. 636. l. penult. r. *which is a thirſt.* p. 637. l. 18. r. *ſeeks.* p. 641. l. 24. r. *temptations.* p. 642. l. 12. r. *ever:* p. 643. l. 10. for *deſire*, r. *deſie.* p. 645. l. 14. for *yet*, r. *yea.* p. 654. l. 2. for *him*, r, *m.*

1 S. JOHN ver. 7, 8.

For there are three that bear witneſs in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and theſe three are one:

And there are three that bear witneſs in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Bloud; and theſe three agree in one.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

An Introduction to the Enſuing Diſcourſe, ſhewing the Scope of it.

IT is not my deſign in this Diſcourſe, to explain and eſtabliſh the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity; which ſeveral great Writers have inferred, with much appearance of reaſon, from the remarkable difference there is between thoſe words whereby S. *John* expreſſes the Unity of the firſt three witneſſes, and thoſe whereby he expreſſes the Unity of the laſt: But to ſettle the Faith and Hope of Chriſtian Souls, in the Lord *Jeſus*; which is the true ſcope of the Apoſtle in this part of his Epiſtle, though in no Treatiſe, that I have met withal, it hath from hence been diſtinctly and fully repreſented.

That this is the drift of the Apoſtles Diſcourſe, and ought to be the intention of mine; will be very apparent, if we go

but back ſo far as the *fourth* Verſe of this Chapter, and from thence take our riſe for that Argument, which I purpoſe to purſue. To know that we are *born of God*, and ſo ſhall be his Heirs, is a thing in which, above all others, we are moſt highly concern'd. That we may have therefore a certain character of one divinely deſcended, S. *John* lays down this General mark of him whereby he may be known, that *Whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the World.* By this a Chriſtian is to be tried, and hereby he diſcovers himſelf what he is, whether the child of God in name only or in deed and in truth. If when he meets with any thing in this world that would ſeduce or affright him from his duty, he not only defies it and ſets himſelf againſt it, but makes it yield to his reſolution of ſtedfaſt obedience to God's Commandments (which every man, he ſays in the foregoing verſe, that loves God, will certainly keep and not think them *grievous* neither) it is a plain demonſtration that he is dear to God, and hath his very Spirit in him.

Now next to this there is nothing more neceſſary and deſirable to be known, than how we may obtain this great and matchleſs victory over every thing in the world that

that oppoſes our Chriſtian reſolution; and ſo undoubtedly approve our ſelves *heroical perſons*, as they were anciently called, that are born from above. And here alſo the Apoſtle lends us his aſſiſtance; telling us in the latter end of that *fourth* Verſe, that we muſt atchieve it by Faith. *And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith.* So couragious, ſo powerful, ſo ſucceſsful is an hearty lively Faith, that you ſee he calls it by the name of *victory* it ſelf. If we believe ſtedfaſtly, we ſhall tread the world under our feet, and eaſily deſpiſe all its temptations; as thoſe valiant Worthies did, whoſe example another Apoſtle ſets before us, in the Eleventh Chapter to the *Hebrews*: A portion of Scripture which he that means to be a conqueror, ſhould think he can never read too oft.

But there is a farther enquiry remaining, which every body will be apt to make; and that is, what this *Faith* may be, which is ſo victorious and triumphant. And therefore the Apoſtle takes care to ſatisfie us in this matter alſo; when he tells us, Verſe 5. it is nothing elſe but *to believe that Jeſus is the Son of God.* To be heartily perſwaded, he means, that that great

perſon, who was born of the *Virgin Mary*, and was known by the name of *Jeſus*, and overcame the world ſo glorioufly, was indeed ſent from God unto us, and owned by him as *the expreſs image of his perſon*; ſo that we may as infallibly depend upon the truth of what he hath ſaid, either of himſelf, or concerning us, as we can upon any thing of Senſe or Reaſon; by which we think our ſelves bound to guide and determine our reſolutions and actions in this life.

But ſtill after all this, there is one thing more that we cannot but deſire to be very ſure of; without which all the reſt will ſtand us in no ſtead, but we ſhall flag and deſpair of ſucceſs, *viz. That Jeſus is indeed the Son of God.* This if it be not well proved by ſubſtantial arguments, we can have no ſolid faith, and ſo no victory; and ſo no ſon-ſhip, no hope in another world. The Apoſtle therefore, that he may ſerve us in bringing ſome evident demonſtration of this ſo important a truth, tells us in the next words (Verſe 6.) that *Jeſus* did not only ſay he was God's Son, and confidently affirm himſelf to be the Divine perſon ſo long look'd for, to come into the world; but that he came with very

very ſufficient and unreproveable witneſſes of it, *viz.* the *WATER*, the *BLOUD*, and the *SPIRIT*: which made this truth good to all thoſe, who conſidered their teſtimony. If the firſt of theſe [*WATER*] ſhould not be thought great enough to merit belief; yet the [*BLOUD*] joyned with it adds great force to its perſwaſion. Or if both theſe ſeem too weak, yet this laſt, the *SPIRIT*, the Apoſtle doubts not is ſo ſtrong to conquer mens minds, and make them believe in *Jeſus*, that he ſays, *The Spirit is truth.* That is, ſuch an undoubted proof that *Jeſus* was what he pretended to be, *the Son of God*; that no man can be deceived who relies upon it, and no man can refuſe, if he give heed to it, to rely and depend upon ſuch a witneſs.

Now this was a thing notorious in thoſe days, and needed no proof at all, the whole Country of *Judæa* could witneſs it, that *he came by* (or rather *with*) *Water, Bloud and the Spirit.* And therefore the Apoſtle doth not go about to make this good, that there were ſuch *Witneſſes* (it being a matter confeſſed) but rather repeats it over again, as the ſtrongeſt proof of his Divine Authority: adding more-

over there-withal, that there were three other Witneſſes, who by their concurrent teſtimony would unanimouſly juſtifie this Truth. *For*, ſaith he, in the words I have choſen to explain, *There are three that bear record (or witneſs) in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt: and theſe three are one. And there are three that bear witneſs in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Bloud: and theſe three agree in one.* As if he had ſaid, You cannot reaſonably doubt of that which we preach concerning *Jeſus*, if you go but to thoſe three witneſſes, to which I have ſent you, the *Water*, the *Bloud* and the *Spirit*; for they all affirm with one mouth, that he was the *Son of God*. And as they teſtifie this to you upon the Earth; ſo there are three other Witneſſes alſo who declare it to you from Heaven: to whom I firſt direct you; and then to thoſe three that here on Earth, as I have told you, bear their record to him.

There are not a few Copies of the New Teſtament, it muſt be confeſſed, which leave out the Teſtimony of theſe three Witneſſes that ſpeak from Heaven, not reading the *ſeventh* Verſe; as is noted not only by *Socinus* and his followers, but by *Eraſmus*,

Eraſmus, *Grotius*, *Curcellæus*, and our Learned *Selden*, whoſe collections to this purpoſe far exceed all former obſervations. But yet this laſt named Great Author, hath ſaid ſo much * to juſtifie the Antiquity of our preſent Reading, and to keep the ſeventh Verſe in the place wherein it now ſtands, that I make no queſtion theſe are the words of S. *John*, concerning the three Heavenly Witneſſes, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*; and accordingly I ſhall in the firſt place appeal to their teſtimony for the confirming of this Truth, and for the ſupporting thereby of our Faith, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.*

* L. 2. *de Synod. cap.* 4. *num.* 4.

And if any body ſhall ſay, What need is there of this in a Chriſtian Country? There are no Infidels ſure among us; nor are we in danger to turn *Pagans*, *Turks* or *Jews*, who blaſpheme the Lord *Jeſus?* I ſhall not labour to ſtop *their mouths*, by caſting reproaches on *others*; nor complain of the apoſtaſie which ſome think they have reaſon to lay to the charge of too many in this preſent untoward generation: But deſire them to take their Anſwer from S. *John* himſelf, in the *thirteenth* Verſe of this very Chapter: Where they will find that he thought it not unneceſſary *to write theſe*

these things to them that believe on the name of the Son of God; that they might know how happy a thing it was to be a Christian, and that they might believe (i. e. continue to believe) *on the name of the Son of God.* And I may modestly suppose, that what he thought good to assert here with so much care and exactness, it will not be thought an unprofitable diligence if I study to expound and enlarge, for the benefit of believers. It will be some satisfaction to me however, to have had it in my heart to do some honour to my Saviour, and to have endeavoured to make any part of his holy Book more clearly understood; especially if what I write shall encrease the Faith of any Christian Soul, and fill it with an assured hope in *Jesus*, by abiding constant in this belief, that *he is the Son of God.*

That being the thing which is to be proved by these witnesses, it will be necessary to search a little into the meaning of the Phrase, before we take their examination about it. And it must be confessed, that though *Jesus* be the *Eternal Son of the Father, God of God, begotten of him before all Worlds*; yet this is not always meant when he is called *his Son*: which is a name in the holy stile, not so much expressing

ſing his Nature as his high Authority and Sovereign power, which he hath received, as the Mediator between him and us, from God the Father Almighty. So I think we are here to underſtand the Apoſtle, who under the Name *Jeſus* comprehends all that belongs to his perſon, both his Divine and Humane nature; and affirms that this perſon hath Sovereign Authority committed to him by God the Father of all: who hath given him Commiſſion, and deputed him in his ſtead to declare his mind, and acquaint us with his will; and, having by himſelf purged our ſins, promoted him to ſit down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high, as that great King and Lord of all, by whom we are to be governed now, and to be judged at the laſt day. Sure I am, in many places of the holy Scripture which ſay, *he is the Son of God*, the meaning is expounded in other places to be this; that *he is the Chriſt*, or the anointed of God. That is, *Jeſus*, who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin *Mary*, crucified under *Pontius Pilate*, roſe again from the dead, and afterward appointed S. *John* and the reſt of the Apoſtles, to preach thoſe things to all Nations which we read in the holy Goſpel; was indeed ſent of God

(accord-

(according to the ancient Prophecies) with his own power and authority, and is now, by the ſuffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, to be our King and Sovereign Lord, whom we are all to obey, and from whom alone we are to expect all our rewards.

And there is great reaſon to think that theſe are phraſes of the very ſame import, here in S. *John*, if we compare but the *firſt* Verſe of this Chapter with the *fifth*. In the former we read, that *whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is born of God*: In the latter he tells us, that *he who overcometh the world, believeth that Jeſus is the Son of God*. It is the very ſame Faith no doubt whereby we are *born of God*, and whereby we *overcome the world*; and therefore it is the very ſame thing to believe that *Jeſus is the Chriſt*, and to believe that *Jeſus is the Son of God*. Expreſs it how you pleaſe, either of theſe ways, this alone is the Faith which can regenerate a man and put a Divine Spirit into him; that is, make him a conqueror over the world as *Jeſus* was. Let the *ſecond* Chapter of this Epiſtle, *ver.* 22. be conſulted alſo, and there you will find, that *Chriſt* and the *Son* are terms equivalent,

and

and have the ſame ſignification. To which if you add ſome places in the Evangeliſts, they will make you ſee this more evidently. When S. *Peter* made this confeſſion, xvi. *Matth.* 16. that *Jeſus* was *Chriſt the Son of the living God*, there is no more meant, one would think, by thoſe words, *the Son of God*, than what the other word, *Chriſt*, includes: becauſe when our Saviour would have them know that it was not fit for them, as yet, to divulge this truth which S. *Peter* confeſſed, he only charges his Diſciples (*ver.* 20.) that they ſhould tell no man that he was *Jeſus the Chriſt*. And if this be not ground enough to conclude the identity (as we ſpeak) of theſe words, the other Evangeliſts will put it out of doubt. For S. *Mark* makes the confeſſion of S. *Peter* to have been no more than this, *Thou art the Chriſt*, viii. 29. And S. *Luke* relates it not much otherwiſe, when he ſays that he acknowledged our Saviour to be *the Chriſt of God*, ix. 20. To be the *Chriſt*, or to be the *Son*, the *Chriſt of God*, or the *Son of God*, according to the underſtanding of theſe Divine writers, is the very ſame; and in theſe places nothing different. And indeed, it is very probable that S. *Hieroms* opinion is true, who believed

that

that the Apoſtles were not yet ſuch proficients as to underſtand the eternal generation of our Lord *Jeſus* from the eſſence of the Father. For we find them very ignorant of divers things that were eaſier to be learnt than this, which if they had known, they would not have expected to ſee him ſettle his Throne upon Earth, nor doubted of his Reſurrection from the dead, and many other things, as they did.

But the comparing of two other places will make this ſtill more manifeſt. In the xxvi. *Matth.* 63. we read that the High Prieſt adjured our Saviour to tell him, if he were *the Chriſt, the Son of God.* They all expected one to appear under this character; This was the common title of that great perſon, who they believed would ſhortly come: But they meant no more by it, than one appointed by God to be their King, as is apparent from S. *Luke*, who relates that queſtion barely thus; xxii. 67. *Art thou the Chriſt? tell us.* And after our Saviour had made that anſwer which we read both in him and S. *Matthew*; he tells us (*ver.* 70.) they all replied again, *Art thou then the Son of God?* which was no more than to ſay, muſt we take this for confeſſed then, that thou affirmeſt

firmeſt thy ſelf to be ſent, anointed, and ſet over us by God? Wilt thou ſtand to that which thou juſt now ownedſt, when we asked thee that queſtion? For without all doubt the Chief Prieſts and the Scribes intended nothing by that phraſe, *the Son of God*, but what was comprehended in the other, *the Chriſt*. And therefore when *Pilate*, upon their accuſation, examined him upon the ſame matter, he asks nothing elſe but this (as this Apoſtle S. *John* relates, xviii. 33.) *Art thou the King of the Jews?* which is the plain interpretation of the word, *Chriſt*. For that is not the proper name of any perſon, as *Lactantius* * rightly obſerves, but a *name of power and dominion*, ſignifying him to be their Sovereign: For in this ſtile, ſays he, the *Jews* were wont to ſpeak of their Kings, whom they called *Chriſts*, or Gods anointed.

* *Nuncupatio potestatis & regni. Sic enim Judai Reges ſuos appellabant. L. 4. Cap. 7.*

Once more, when they were enraged at our Saviour for calling himſelf the *Son of God* (as S. *John* tells us, Chap. x.) He juſtifies himſelf by a reaſon which ſignifies no more, but that he called himſelf, *the Chriſt*, the anointed of God, as you may read, *ver.* 34, 35, 36. If they were called *Gods* in old time, *to whom the Word of God*

God came (*i. e.* who received commiſſion and authority from God to be the Judges and Rulers of his people) then it could be no offence, much leſs a *blaſphemy*, for him whom God had *ſanctified* (*i. e.* ſet apart and anointed to this office of being their Lord and King) to call himſelf the *Son of God*. For ſo he was by his place; and there was no need he ſhould ſay any thing of the Divine nature that was in him. Well then, to be the *Son of God* and to be *the Chriſt*, being but different expreſſions of the ſame thing; and the word *Chriſt* ſignifying *anointed*, one ſet apart to an high office, and (in its eminent ſence) that perſon who was to ſuſtain the place of God in this world, to be the King of *Iſrael*, yea the Governour and Ruler of all mankind; we muſt conclude that when the Apoſtle ſays here, *Jeſus is the Son of God*, his meaning is, that He is the Holy one of God, the perſon whom he ſanctified by the unction of the Holy Ghoſt, and ſent into the World; to whom he hath now given all power in Heaven and in Earth, that every knee ſhould bow to him as the Sovereign Lord of the World; whom we are to hear and obey and depend upon in all things.

For this is the ſtile you may obſerve of the

the Old Testament (from whence you may learn the rise and original of this manner of speech) which calls those Kings, who derived their authority immediately from God, by the name of *his Sons*. Because when they were anointed by his order, they were made what they were not before, and begotten (as they spoke) again: And being created by God to their new dignity, they are therefore called his Sons. The first time we meet with the phrase, is in the story of the first King of *Israel*, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 1. where *Saul* is called, as the words are in the *Hebrew*, *the Son of one year in his Kingdom*. Because there was but a year passed since the time of his unction; by which he was born Gods Vicegerent, and (as you read x. 6.) *turned into another man*. And indeed we find this imitated in Ethnick writers, who call the day their Emperors entred upon their Reign, their *Birth-day*. So we read in *Spartianus* that *Adrian* being informed by Letters that *Trajan* had named him for his Successor, caused the *birth-day of his adoption* to be celebrated. And two days after, hearing of his death, he ordered they should keep *the birth-day of his Empire* *. But I do not intend to launch out of the holy story, where we find this more plainly

* *Natalem imperii in-stituit celebrandum.*

delivered in the History of the succeeding Kings of *Israel*. For when the *Philistins*, the *Moabites*, the *Syrians*, the *Ammonites*, and other neighbouring People with their Princes, conspired (after they had been conquered by *David*) against the *Lord* and against his *anointed*; resolving to cast off their yoke; the *Psalmist* shews (*Psal.* 2.) how vain and idle their attempt would prove, because God had appointed him, whom he sent a Prophet to anoint, to be his King. This decree of God he averrs, and openly declares (*ver.* 6, 7.) that the Lord said unto him, *Thou art my Son, this day* (*i. e.* when he anointed him) *I have begotten thee*. So that to rise against him was to war with God Almighty, whose *Son*, that is, Vicegerent he was in those Countries. And therefore if they were well advised he exhorts them all to go and *kiss the Son*, *ver.* 12. *i. e.* submit themselves, by that token of humble subjection, to him who had his Authority immediately from God: Nay, was *his first-born*, the most eminent Prince, that is, that ever he made, lxxxix. *Psal.* 27. And therefore he was the prime type of our Lord Christ, to whom these words are applied, because he was the *Son of David*, that great King, who was to *reign over them for ever*, as the

Angel

Angel said, i. *Luke* 33. And if you pass from hence to the next King, *Solomon*, (who had a particular unction also, and in whose reign was prefigured the glorious Kingdom of our Saviour) you will find that God says by a Prophet concerning him, *I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 14. Which words are a promise to make *Solomon* King, and settle him on the Throne of his Father *David*. So He understood it, as appears by the speech which *David* made, not long before his death, to all the great men of his Kingdom, 1 *Chron.* xxviii. where he tells them (*ver.* 4.) that as *Jesse* had many Sons, *Yet God liked him only to make him King over all Israel*: So of the many Sons which the Lord had given him (*ver.* 5.) *He had chosen Solomon to sit upon the Throne of the Kingdom of the Lord.* As is evident, saith he, from those words of God spoken by *Nathan* (*ver.* 6.) *I have chosen him to be my* SON, *and I will be his* FATHER, i. e. made choice of him to be King of *Israel* in thy room, and as I have been to thee, so I will be to him. Thus *Solomon*, one would think, interpreted these words, when he prays God, who had made good one part of his promise, to perform the other also, 2 *Chron.* i. 8, 9. *Thou hast shewed*

great mercy unto David my Father, and has made me reign in his stead (as much as to say, *made me thy Son*) *now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto my Father be established*; that is, of being *a Father to me*, now that I am become thy son, and set by thee over a people, *like the dust of the Earth in multitude.*

By this time I suppose it will be no wonder to any intelligent person, that these Kings are called the *Sons of God*; who did not only govern in that Country, which was called, it is well known, *God's land*, and the inhabitants whereof were his *peculiar people*: but were appointed by his special direction, and *anointed with his holy oil* (lxxxix. *Psal.* 20.) and had, as it were, their being and birth from God, who promoted them to *sit upon his Throne*, and to be *Kings for the Lord God*, as you read 2 *Chron.* ix. 8. so that the Kingdom it self is called in that Book *the Kingdom of the Lord*, xiii. 8. And the Judges also in the Courts of that Kingdom are said to exercise the *Judgment of the Lord* and not of man (xix. 6.) that is, to sit there in God's stead, to do men justice: And because of this great power and trust committed to them by him, are called, as you heard lxxxii.

lxxxii. *Pſal.* 1, 6. *Gods, and the children of the moſt High*; whoſe deputies they were, and for whom they judged. And therefore it is the leſs wonder, that when this Great Prince came among them, to whom *all judgment is committed*, and who hath *all power in Heaven and in Earth*, and is *Lord of all*, and *appointed by God the heir of all things*, He is called by the ſame name that they were. If there were no other reaſon for it, his office would give him a title to it: becauſe he is the *Lords Chriſt*, anointed by God to the higheſt dignity and government under him, not only over that Country, but over all Nations on the Earth; who, by believing on him, were all to be made a *choſen generation, a royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. But to ſhow his moſt excellent greatneſs he is called the *Son of God*, with two marks of his preeminence above all other who have had that name: Firſt, he is called, ὁ υἱὸς, *that Son*, that eminent King, the King of Kings; like to whom none ever was. For, ſecondly, whereas thoſe *ſons of the higheſt* ſpoken of before, were to *die like* other *men, and to fall like one of the Princes*, in other Countries, He is called the Son, τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος, *of that God who liveth*, xvi. *Matth.* 16. that is, *Pſal.* 82. 7.

of the immortal eternal God: And by consequence is like his Father, an everlasting King, *of whose Kingdom*, as the Angel told his Mother, i. *Luke* 33. *there shall be no end.*

Thus the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, who understood this language well enough, hath discoursed in the *First* Chapter. Where he proves that *Jesus* is the *Son of God* in a more eminent sence than any Angel in Heaven, according to those ancient prophecies before named, concerning *David* and *Solomon*, as you read *ver.* 4, 5. From whence the *Jews* learnt to call the Messiah, who they confess is in those places mystically spoken of, by that name of the *Son of God*. Which the Apostle there shows is the greatest name of excellence, and signifies the highest honour and dignity; such as God hath conferred upon no other. And then he proceeds to show, that according to other prophecies which speak of his supereminence, *his Throne is for ever and ever*: (*ver.* 8.) For *God*, who is *his God* (in a peculiar manner loving and rewarding him) *hath anointed him with the oil of gladness* (preferred him, that is) *above all that partake of Kingly dignity*, *ver.* 9. He hath made him

indeed his *first-born, the Prince of all the Kings of the Earth* (as S. *John* speaks, i. *Revel.* 5.) to whom we are to submit our selves with the greatest devotion of spirit, and from whom we may then expect Protection, Blessing, and the noblest Rewards. For he is the long expected *Son of God*, who excells all other that were ever called by that name; the *King* of inconceivable Majesty, whose splendor could not so much as be fore-shadowed by *Solomon* in all his glory. Thus *Nathanael* I observe puts these two expressions together, in his confession of our Saviour, out of a vehement affection redoubling his words, *Thou art that Son of God, thou art that King of Israel*, i. John 49.

This is the business upon which we are to examine these *Witnesses*; we are to consider what they say to this point, that the Lord *Jesus* was sent from God as *Moses* had formerly been: only *Moses* as a *Servant*, but he as a *Son* (according to what you read, iii. *Heb.* 5, 6.) with a fulness of authority, with all the power of God; so that we may confidently rely on every thing that he hath said, as the very mind and sence of God. This if we can hear them speak, they are witnesses so beyond

all exception, that we cannot chuſe but reverence him, and receive him, and obey him, and put our truſt in him, and rejoyce in his royal favour and love evermore. For the firſt three are no leſs perſons than the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*. Whoſe gracious aſſiſtance let us humbly implore, that this and all other our works may be begun, continued and ended, to the glorifying of his holy Name.

A Prayer.

O *Father of lights, from whom cometh every good, and every perfect gift, illuminate my mind in theſe Meditations, that I may be able to enlighten others, and lead them into a good underſtanding in all things. Guide and direct my thoughts, that I may reaſon and diſcourſe aright. Shine into all our Souls by the light of the glorious Goſpel* John. 6. 40 *of Chriſt, that we* ſeeing the Son, may believe on him: *and being made thy children by adoption and grace, may be daily more and more renewed by thy holy Spirit. Settle in our Souls that mighty faith, whereby we may have*

have power and ſtrength to have victory, and to triumph over the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh. Strengthen it every day by conſtant Meditation on thoſe things, which thou, O Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, haſt ſo many ways declared to us: that it may grow ſtill more victorious, and we may feel the happy fruit of it in greater joy and triumph of ſpirit, in aſſured expectation of the Crown of righteouſneſs, which thou haſt promiſed to all faithful Souls.

O that none of the inticing allurements of this world may ever more deceive us, and ſteal away our hearts from our true happineſs: nor any of the troubleſome paſſages of this life ever hereafter diſhearten us, and divert us from the purſuit of it: But the Faith of Chriſt may ſo intirely poſſeſs our hearts, as to keep us ſtedfaſt and upright, in the midſt of all the temptations, of what kind ſoever they be, that aſſault us. And looking up unto Jeſus *the author and finiſher of our Faith, we may ſtill ſay with true reſolution of ſpirit, Thou art the Son of God moſt high, thou art the King of incomprehenſible Majeſty, thou art the Lord of all. We will conſtantly adhere to thee, as thy faithful ſubjects. We will follow thee in faith and love, and patient obedience to the very death. And hope that as we feel, by thy power*

power in us, we are the children of God, so we shall be heirs, heirs of God, joynt-heirs, with thee, O blessed Lord; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Concerning the Witneſſes *in general, and the Teſtimony of the* FATHER *in particular.*

IF any man urge us to receive a thing which is new and ſtrange, we either turn away our ears, if we take him for a frivolous perſon, or elſe require him to ſhow us good evidence for what he ſays, if he ſeem to be wiſe and ſerious. And the more importunate he is to be believed, the more earneſt we are to know what he hath to ſhow for himſelf, and to call for his proofs: in which if he fail or they come not home to the purpoſe, he is ſo far from gaining any credit with thoſe who examine them, that they prove a very conſiderable argument againſt him. Eſpecially when he pretends to come from God, and to

to bring us messages from Heaven, we all expect the clearer and diviner demonstrations, before we can resign our mind unto him. For that which is to make all things credible, must have very pregnant Reasons accompanying it to win credit to it self. If that which stands as a reason for all that a man says, be not it self grounded upon the cleerest and most undeniable, it turns against him and proves nothing but a confutation of all that it was brought to assert.

Now *Jesus* pretending not only to this honour of *coming from God* (which is a sufficient Argument for any thing that he says in his Name) but also to an higher Dignity of being *his Son*; and so of being privy to all his secrets, of lying in his very bosom, and being invested with a power equal to the Almighties; if He and his Apostles (who affirmed the same of him, after he was put to death, and that as a Malefactor) should be defective in their proofs of so lofty and weighty a pretension, *He* would be rendred of all other the most contemptible, and they become men most ridiculous, for obtruding him on the world in such a quality, upon slight or no demonstrations. For the greater and more

concern-

concerning any Assertion is, which we propound to mens belief, the stronger and more plentiful Arguments they justly expect to induce a perswasion. Which if they be wanting, it is so far from being a fault not to surrender their Souls to that proposition; that it is a vertue to refuse admittance, and they could not excuse themselves from a great guilt, should they be so easie as to let it find entertainment. Nay, it is a commendable piece of caution and wariness, to *suspend* our belief in a matter of very great importance, though there be some considerable proofs offered; if they be not proportionable to the weight of the thing, unto which we are to deliver up no less than our Souls.

Let us see therefore what evidence this Follower and Favourite (as I may call him) of *Jesus* produces and lays before us, to make good this, which he preached for a certain truth; that He is no less than the *Son of God*. Let us hear what his *Witnesses* say, for so he calls his proofs, to this great point; and consider whether they speak so home to it, that we cannot reasonably refuse to believe it. The office of a *witness* is to give in all the evidence he can for the clearing of any matter in question;

for

for this very end, that there by the controversie may be decided upon his credit. When the Apostle therefore calls for his *Witnesses*, who are ready he saith to justifie this which he asserts, if any body make a doubt of it, or be not well setled in this belief; his meaning is, that it relies upon such solid grounds, that no man shall be able to deny *Jesus* to be the *only begotten of the Father*, the *Christ of God*; unless he can disprove the Authority of his witnesses, which he was sure would never be in any mans power to do, they were of such known verity. If this be called in question, whether *Jesus* be the *Son of God* or no, if any list to bring it to trial, and examine it before the bar of impartial Reason; S. *John* here offers his *witnesses*, faithful and just, of undoubted Truth and Integrity, who shall make it good: So that if you will hear them, and consider what they say, and then give sentence according to their evidence, you must needs judge that he is what he said he was, The Son of God most high; and quit him in your Consciences of all the calumnies & aspersions of the *Jews*, who said he was a deceiver of the people.

Now the *witnesses* that he brings, you see,

see, dwell in two very distant places; *three* of them in the *Heavens*, and the other *three* in the *Earth*. From these two several regions they give their Testimony; the former from above, the later here beneath. For when the Apostle says that there are *three*, μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, *testifying or bearing witness in the Heaven*, and as many that do the same, ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, *on the Earth*; the meaning is not that the First three gave their testimony to those that are in Heaven, and the last three to those that are on Earth; but that the First three *witnesses* are themselves in Heaven, and the other three were on Earth, and so from thence they gave their testimony to *Jesus*. They that dwell in Heaven delivered their testimony and justified this Truth from above, and the other residing on the Earth did there speak to it, and make it good. Let us first hear these supreme and Heavenly *witnesses*, and take under examination what they declare concerning him whom we acknowledge for our Lord, and what Authority he hath, according to their testimony, to exact all obedience of us, as he is the *Son of God*. And first of all let us begin with the witness of the FATHER: for the truth is, that as he is the *First*, and the Beginning

of

of all things, so he did first testifie of *Jesus*; and by his voice from Heaven proclaimed him to be his *Son*, before He, or any else was so bold as to affirm it. And as he being the *First*, did bear witness to him, before any of the rest spoke a word; so, according to the number of these Heavenly witnesses, He gave his Testimony of him *three* times.

I.

The *first* time was when our Saviour began to appear publickly among the people; coming out of his privacy, *from Nazareth of Galilee to be baptized of John in Jordan.* He had no need indeed of that Baptism, as *John* affirmed and our Saviour did not deny: but as became one who had put himself into the state of our meanness, and appeared in our sinful flesh, he would omit nothing that belonged to the duty of a pious person. And therefore he would have the Baptist do to him as he did to others, knowing that he exercised this Ministry by the appointment of God; whose institutions ought to be reverenced, and to whose will all good men ought to conform themselves. Now he had no sooner given this example of humble obe-

Matt. 3. 13. Mark 1. 9.

dience,

dience, but as he came out of the Water, God the Father of Heaven declared him in expreſs terms to be what S. *John* here ſays he was, his *only Son.* Which teſtimony of his is recorded by no leſs than *three Evangeliſts*, as you may find if you read iii. *Matth.* 17. i. *Mark* 11. iii. *Luke* 22. who tells us that he ſaw the Heavens at that time, opened to him, and a Divine Glory come from thence and ſettle upon him, which was followed with a voice from Heaven, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* So S. *Matthew* reports the words of God the *FATHER* (from whom this voice came, it is plain, becauſe he calls *Jeſus* his *Son*) or as they may be rendred more emphatically, *This is that Son of mine, that beloved one* (whom the Prophets promiſed, particularly xlii. *Iſaiah* 1. God would ſend to them, as *Tertullian* well expounds it) who is moſt dear to me, and ſhall declare my whole will and pleaſure. There is a mark ſet before it, ἰδοὺ, lo, or behold; that we may all attend and liſten diligently to this voice: for now *the word of God came to him* (as he ſpeaks in another place, I told you, concerning thoſe who were called Gods under the old Law, x. *John* 35.) and in an audible manner authorized him, to begin

to act as the Chriſt of God, whom He had anointed, as you ſhall hear, with the Holy Ghoſt, juſt at this moment, when He declared him his Son, by this voice from Heaven.

Which, if you carefully obſerve it, is expreſſed by the other Evangeliſts in ſuch a manner, that we may underſtand it was directed to himſelf; as that commiſſion which was ſent him from Heaven, to give him power to exerciſe the office of Gods ſupreme and only Miniſter in this world; in whom alone he was well pleaſed, and in none elſe, but by him. For S. *Mark* ſays the voice was in theſe words, *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* Which plainly tell us that he ſpake *to Jeſus* (and not merely *of* him) that he might be confident He was the perſon whom God had now *ſanctified and ſent into the world.* And ſo S. *Luke* hath recorded it more fully and expreſly, *Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleaſed.* As if he had ſaid, Thou art the perſon to whom I have a favour above all others. I have anointed thee above all thy fellows: none that have had this name, are ſo dear to me as thou art; to whom I commit my authority, and inveſt with my power, and intruſt

intruſt with all my mind and will.

Now becauſe we all ſuſpect private Revelations, and think it no ſufficient ground to believe one that ſays God ſpake to him, unleſs he can bring ſome other very credible perſon beſides himſelf to atteſt that he alſo heard it, or be able otherways to demonſtrate it; God was pleaſed therefore, not only by other means to verifie this, but ſo to direct S. *Matthew*'s pen, that he hath as good as told us, that the voice which was directed to *Jeſus* himſelf (telling him he was his Son) was uttered likewiſe in the audience of *John Baptiſt*, a perſon famed for his ſanctity, reverenced by all the Nation of the *Jews*, and acknowledged to be a Prophet. Though it was delivered I believe in thoſe words and ſyllables wherein S. *Mark* or S. *Luke* have ſet it down, for as the Heavens were opened *unto him* (iii. *Matth.* 16.) and *he* ſaw the Spirit deſcending, ſo the voice which accompanied it, ſpake in all likelihood unto him; yet it being heard alſo by *John*, who had baptiſed him, and who ſaw all that went before it as he himſelf declared, it was as if God had ſaid to him, *This is my beloved Son*, &c. and therefore ſo S. *Matthew* relates it. The

Father Almighty by this voice awakened the attention of the Baptiſt, and bade him, as it were, mark it, that this perſon to whom he now ſpake was the Meſſiah; who now entred upon his office, being declared the Son of God, and ſhould *increaſe* and grow (as he preſently after diſcerned, iii. *John* 30.) till he came to be declared by the Reſurrection from the dead, *the Son of God with power* (as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, i. *Rom.* 4.) that is, with all the power belonging to his office, of Lord of all things, the great King of Heaven and Earth.

Till this time he knew no more of *the Chriſt*, but that he was coming, God having ordered him to make way for him; and that he ſhould immediately appear, and be ſo much ſuperior to him (iii. *Matth.* 11.) that he ſhould not be worthy to be one of his meaneſt ſervants: His countenance he was not acquainted withall, nor could he ſay, this is the perſon, when he met with him, as he himſelf confeſſes, i. *John* 31. But thus much he was told by him that ſent him to Baptize, as he there declares, *ver.* 33. that on whom he ſhould ſee the Spirit deſcend and remain, he ſhould conclude that perſon was the Meſſiah, from

from whom they might expect the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, which had been ſo long a ſtranger to their Nation. And accordingly, having ſome intimation of him from the Spirit, as ſoon as *Jeſus* offered himſelf to receive his Baptiſm (iii. *Matth.* 14.) immediately after he was confirmed in his belief that this was the *Chriſt*, by the fulfilling of the former ſign (i. *John* 32.) And thereupon publiſhes it openly to all in theſe words, *ver.* 34. *I ſaw and bare record* (*i. e.* gave my teſtimony of him) *that this is the Son of God.* So God himſelf taught him to call our Saviour; for it ſhould ſeem by the words of S. *Matthew*, that he had this further ground to believe it, and ſo was furniſhed with greater ability to teſtifie it; that he *heard* the voice from Heaven as well as *ſaw* the Spirit deſcend upon him. Though the Father ſpake the words to *Jeſus*, yet it was in the preſence and hearing of this perſon (who was *ſent from God to be his witneſs*, i. *John* 6, 7.) and as if he had ſaid to him, *This is my beloved Son*; mind what I ſay; go and teſtifie that this is He in whom I delight above all others, Thou mayeſt be ſure of it, for I tell thee ſo, who gave thee all the Authority thou haſt. And accordingly you read that he went and did his office,

for which he was sent; that is, *He bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me,* 1. *John* 15. which he repeats in the same Chapter as his *record* (*ver.* 19.) in behalf of our Saviour, on two other occasions, *ver.* 27. and 30. to let them know that the person of whom he gave this testimony before he was baptised of him, was now come, and exalted to a far higher dignity than himself, being a more *mighty* person, as the rest of the Evangelists speak, no less than the *Son of God.* This he means by being *preferred before him*, appointed by the Father of all to an incomparably more excellent office which he entred upon after the preaching and baptism of *John*; who began indeed his Ministry before *Jesus*, but it was not because he was greater, but rather because he was less, and came to prepare his way, who was, as he acknowledges, Πρῶτος, the *first* of the two; not only in regard of his Divine Nature, but in regard of his sublime office, into which he was now put, by being pronounced, *the beloved Son of God*, by this voice from Heaven.

Which the Devil himself, one would think heard, and understood to be such a testimony concerning *Jesus*, as committed

mitted the greateſt Miniſtry to him, and was a Divine warrant to go in Gods name to the world, as *Moſes*, after the Angel ſpake to him out of the buſh, did to the *Jews*. And therefore when immediately after this our Saviour was led by the Spirit into the wilderneſs, the Devil would have had him give ſome proof of his Divine power, as *Moſes* did, or rather ſhow himſelf, by a greater evidence than *Moſes* gave, to be greater than he: that he might be ſatisfied *Jeſus* was no leſs than the voice declared him, the *Son of God*. So you read iv. *Matth.* 3. that the firſt thing he ſaid to him was, *If thou be the Son of God, command that theſe ſtones be made bread*. As much as to ſay, Thou art now in a ſtarving condition (for he had taken no proviſion with him into the wilderneſs, reſolving to depend on that God who had expreſſed ſuch love to him, as to own him for his Son) here is a fit opportunity for thee to exerciſe thy power, if thou haſt any, by bidding theſe ſtones turn into loaves, which will be a greater wonder than *Moſes* his bringing Manna out of the clouds, and ſhow indeed that thou art God's Son. To which our Saviour anſwers, as you read in the next Verſe, out of *Moſes* himſelf (viii. *Deut.* 3.) and tells

him he might learn from that ſtory of the Manna, there was no need he ſhould imploy his power, which God had committed to him, on this faſhion; for as the *Iſraelites* were maintained in the wilderneſs after a miraculous manner, ſo might He who would prove himſelf to be his Son, not this way by turning ſtones into bread, but by truſting in God, and leaving him to provide for him as he thought good. That's his meaning when he ſays, *Man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* And ſo in the following temptations he ſtill held to this, that he was ſufficiently ſatisfied he was God's Son, and would not demand any farther proof of it, but ſuch as he himſelf would give, who at laſt, *ver.* 11. ordered the *Angels to go and miniſter unto him.* To carry him food, it is like, and congratulate this his firſt victory over the enemy of mankind. Who was not ſo dull, but he learnt by this and many other things afterward, wherein he felt his power, that this voice from Heaven was no vain rumour, no empty inſignificant ſound, but a true report of the very mind of Almighty God: which he himſelf was forced to proclaim as loudly as any body elſe.

For

For you find him, not long after this, with a whole Legion of his companions, acknowledging *Jeſus* to be *the Son of God moſt high*, and with humble proſtrations *worſhipping him*, whom he had the confidence before to perſwade to worſhip himſelf; *crying with a loud voice for Gods ſake that he would not torment him*, v. *Mark* 6, 7, 8. viii. *Luke* 28. Nay, he was ſenſible, one would think, of this as ſoon as ever that temptation was ended. For you read that immediately after it, *Jeſus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee*, iv. *Luke* 14. and there at *Capernaum* met with a man that had *a ſpirit of an unclean Devil*, who *cried out with a loud voice, ſaying, I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God, ver.* 34. which is thus interpreted, *ver.* 41. The Devils came out of many, crying out, and ſaying, *Thou art Chriſt the Son of God: For they knew that he was Chriſt.* But our Saviour would not be beholden to them for their ſuffrage; it was ſufficient that God had declared him his Son, and that *John* Baptiſt atteſted as much, and that the *works which he did* (particularly his diſpoſſeſſing them of their ſtrongeſt holds) *bare witneſs of him.* And therefore he impoſed ſilence on them,

as

as the Evangeliſt there tells us; both becauſe they might by their loud acclamations to him, give the *Phariſees* occaſion to calumniate him, who were too forward to ſay he had confederacy with the Devil; and becauſe it was not fit this ſhould be publiſhed in ſo many words, no not by his Apoſtles (xvi. *Matth.* 20.) till after his Reſurrection and his Aſcenſion to the Throne of his glory, and the coming of the Holy Ghoſt; which demonſtrated he was completely *made both Lord and Chriſt*, as the Apoſtles then openly declared, ii. *Acts* 36.

But till then it ſeems to have been the work of the *Father* alone or principally to bear witneſs of him: for *John* Baptiſt was his *voice crying in the wilderneſs*, and the works our Saviour did were thoſe which his *Father had given him to finiſh*, and the Spirit was the *Finger of God*, which pointed men to him, as I may ſo ſpeak, and bid them receive him as his *beloved Son in whom he was well pleaſed*. And ſhall we not receive this for the greateſt Truth, when God himſelf ſays it? ſhall we not let *him* diſpoſe of our Faith? is not He the Truth? is it poſſible for *him* to falſifie or deceive? or do we imagine He cannot declare

clare his mind, and ſpeak to us as we do one to another? He that formed the mouth, cannot He ſpeak? is his power leſs than ours? can we manifeſt what we would have and make it underſtood, and cannot He in the ſame manner make us know his will and pleaſure? If his expreſs teſtimony then be of any force, here you have it, by an audible voice from Heaven: And *John* the Baptiſt, whom the *Jews*, the Enemies of our Saviour, durſt not but reverence, bare record to him thereupon, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.*

Now if any one ſhould ſay that the certainty of this relies upon the teſtimony of one ſingle perſon, and that it is poſſible he might hear amiſs (though there be no colour for ſuch an objection, he being a Prophet, and acknowledged ſo to be by thoſe who did not acknowledge our Saviour, yet) that this great truth might not depend upon the credit of *John* Baptiſt alone, though a man well acquainted with the manner of Divine Revelations; the *FATHER* was pleaſed a ſecond time, and in the audience of more witneſſes than one, to declare again what he had ſaid before, that he was his *Son.*

This

II.

This was in the Holy Mount, as you may read in the xvii. *Matth.* 5. and in the two following Evangeliſts, ix. *Mark* 7. ix. *Luke* 35. where the *Father* of all was pleaſed to declare in the ſame terms, as he had done at his Baptiſm, and with an audible voice, which aſtoniſhed thoſe that heard it (xvii. *Matth.* 6.) That he was his *beloved Son, in whom he was well pleaſed*; to which Declaration he added this command, *HEAR HIM.* That is, be aſſured that what he ſays to you, is the Truth; and what I ſpeak to the world, it ſhall be by his mouth. Now this voice was uttered in the hearing of no leſs than *three* perſons, whom our Saviour had ſelected from the reſt of his company, to attend him unto this Mountain, where God appeared to bear witneſs to him. Of which three, this Diſciple S. *John* was one; who therefore might with the greater confidence urge here the Teſtimony of the *Father*, which he himſelf heard. And unleſs they to whom he writes this Epiſtle could find him falſe, and guilty of forgery in any other relation, they had no reaſon to call in queſtion his honeſty and faithfulneſs

neſs in this report: which is the more conſiderable, becauſe there were others who heard it as well as he, who might be appealed unto, and askt about it.

One of thoſe who were there preſent and heard it together with him, was S. *Peter*; a man timorous enough, and apt to deny a *Truth*, and therefore of no ſuch courage as to ſupport a *Lye*, with the danger of his life. Who writing to Chriſtian people, as S. *John* here doth, commends *this voice* to them as a ſure witneſs of that Truth, which he was ſhortly to ſeal with his Bloud; and profeſſes his own ſincerity in the relating of it. Read with attention 2 *Pet.* 1. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. where he tells them that our Lord having ſhown him he muſt ſhortly die (when it is no time to diſſemble with God or Man) he would endeavour to ſettle in their minds ſuch a ſolid ground of faith, that, when he was gone, they ſhould ſtand unſhaken, if they did but remember it: And that it was not a thing he had received by hear-ſay, much leſs a deviſed ſtory that had been forged in his own brain; but a matter of which he was an *eye and ear-witneſs*, of which he, and others alſo, had a certain, clear and perfect knowledge.

For

For they ſaw then the glory wherein *Jeſus* was, and they heard the forenamed voice come from that excellent glory, which could be no other but the glory of the Father. Then, and there in that Mount, *Jeſus received from the Father honour and glory*, when there came forth from the mouth of God this voice, in all their hearing; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.*

Here it will be neceſſary to take notice, that the voice, as all of them relate it, was directed not to him, but to thoſe who were there preſent with him. None of them ſay, that it ſpake thus, *THOU art my beloved Son*, &c. (according as S. *Mark* and S. *Luke* report the former voice) but they unanimouſly tell us in theſe *four* places, which I have named, that it was delivered in the other form, *THIS is my beloved Son*, &c. As if He ſpake to the company that attended him, and bade them obſerve that here He owned this perſon to ſtand in ſuch a relation to him, as he and *John Baptiſt* had profeſſed. The former voice might come for his ſake; but there being no need of *his* further ſatisfaction, this was for *theirs*; that they might ſtedfaſtly believe, and that they might be

competent

competent witneſſes of him, and perſwade others to the belief of that, which upon their own certain knowledge they could affirm, was the very mind and will of God. I ſhall have occaſion hereafter to make a further enquiry into both theſe Teſtimonies which the Father gave to his Son *Jeſus*, and therefore I ſhall now diſmiſs them with ſome obſervations concerning this: which will much help to illuſtrate it, and add to the force of it.

The *Firſt* is, that our Saviour having at this time ſequeſtred himſelf, with three of his Apoſtles, into an high mountain to pray to God, was *transfigured before them as he was praying* (xvii. *Matth.* 2. ix. *Luke* 29.) ſo that *his face did ſhine as the Sun*, and his very garments were all *gliſtering*. Τὸ μέλλον μυσταγωγῶν (as S. *Greg. Nazianzen* ſpeaks*) ſhowing before-hand what he was to be hereafter; and making an introduction to the *glory* in which he ſhould ſhine, in the *high* and holy place at the right hand of the Father, where he makes perpetual *interceſſion* for us. For to *ſhine as the Sun* is a phraſe expreſſing ſomething belonging to celeſtial Majeſty in the Kingdom of the Father, xiii. *Matth.* 43. The white and ſplendid garments alſo,

* *Orat.* 35. *p.* 575.

alſo, it were eaſie to ſhow, were proper to Kings and thoſe who waited on them, iii. *Revel.* 4. The Miniſters and royal attendants in the Heavenly Court, were wont always to appear in ſuch radiant brightneſs; though ſhort of this wherein our Saviour now began to ſhine, as the King, ere long, of Heaven and Earth. For ſo S. *John* ſays, i. 14. *We beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father.* And S. *Peter* when he ſpeaks of this ſays, 2 i. 16. *We were eye-witneſſes of his* MAJESTY.

Of which, that they might be aſſured, this was a true repreſentation, you may obſerve, *ſecondly*, how they ſaw a very great Glory appear and approach towards them; called by S. *Mark* and S. *Luke* ſimply a *Cloud*, but by S. *Matthew* xvii. 5. a *bright cloud*: which had uſually been the token of the preſence of the Divine Majeſty. And therefore it is called by S. *Peter* in the place before named (*ver.* 17.) *the excellent or magnificent glory*: and the voice which came out of it, is ſaid (*ver.* 18.) to come *from Heaven*, becauſe it came forth from the preſence of God, of which this *bright cloud* was the viſible ſign. For ſo He appeared anciently to the *Iſraelites*, in a

cloud

cloud that had a splendor or shining light in it, like to the hottest fire, which sometimes brightly glistered and sometimes was obscured. So you read, xix. *Exod.* 18. that *the* LORD *descended in fire upon* the famous *Mount Sinai*, and a little after, xxiv. *Exod.* 16, 17. how the *glory of the Lord dwelt upon* that *Mount, and the cloud covered it* (*i.e.* the glory of the Lord) for the space of *six days*: and then on *the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the midst of that cloud*: And the *sight of the glory of the Lord was as fire that burnt, or glowed with great ardency in the sight of the children of Israel*. That is, on the seventh day, that Glory was revealed and broke forth out of the cloud, wherein for six days it had been wrapped up and hidden from their sight. And so you read in the xl. Chapter of that Book, that as soon as *Moses* had reared up the Tabernacle for the constant habitation of this Divine presence, *the cloud covered it*, and rested upon it without, and the *glory of the Lord* filled it within (*ver.* 34, 35.) which is presently after explained to be *a fire*, which by night appeared *upon the Tabernacle* to guide them in their journey. This is that bright flame, which frighted them when they murmured against *Moses*, called *the glory*

of the Lord appearing in the cloud (xvi. Exod. 7. 10. and xvi. Numb. 42.) threatning to devour them if they were not more obedient. Such a glory, but more pure and more delightful to behold, there was now upon this *Holy Mount*, as S. *Peter* calls it, to make them apprehensive that now they were in the presence of God; who as he did on that Mount (to speak in the words of *Tertullian*) initiate their *forefathers* in the Religion of *Moses*, by showing his glory and by his voice; so here on this was going in the same manner to give testimony to *them* concerning his Son *Jesus*, and so confirm them in the belief of whatsoever he should teach them.

* *Agnosce formam loci, &c. L. 4. adv. Marcionem, C. 22.*

For, *thirdly*, this was not *Mutus Nubes*, as the same *Tertullian* there speaks, a dumb cloud, a silent glory: but a voice came out of it, which was *Novum Patris testimonium super filio*, the Fathers New testimony concerning his Son. In which testimony He was pleased to apply those very words to *Jesus*, which had been spoken by *Moses* concerning a Prophet whom he had bid them look for after him. For in the xviii. of *Deuteronomy* he tells them from God himself (*ver.* 17.) that there should be raised up to them a Pro-

phet

phet like unto him, into *whoſe mouth* (*ver.* 18.) the Lord would *put his own words*, and *who ſhould ſpeak all that he ſhould command him*; *UNTO HIM SHALL YE HEARKEN*, *ver.* 15. as much as to ſay, Be ſure you attend to his words, and give obedience to them. Now theſe very words and ſyllables *HEAR HIM*, are, by that God who made that promiſe to *Moſes*, ſpoken in this place to the Diſciples with a manifeſt application to *Jeſus*: clearly denoting him to be the perſon whom *Moſes* foretold the Lord their God would ſend, to declare his mind unto them, as he himſelf already had done. And that this was really the voice of God, as much as that voice which ſpake to *Moſes*, we have the greater reaſon to conclude from this following, which is the *fourth*, obſervation.

That *Moſes* now ſtood by and heard it: and from thence learnt a great deal more than he knew when he wrote his Book; that this perſon of whom he ſpoke was more than a *Prophet*, being the *Son of Gods deareſt love*. For theſe words which declared him ſo, were ſpoken there where he was preſent: who durſt not contradict them, as ſure he would have done, had he

not known them to be the very voice of God and no deluſion.

I need not enlarge this; becauſe the Evangeliſts tell us ſo plainly, that not only He appeared in glory talking with our Saviour upon this Mountain, but *Elias* alſo accompanied him, which is next to be conſidered. Who being a great Prophet might pretend as fairly as any other man to be the perſon deſigned by *Moſes* in the words forenamed; and yet conſented by his ſilence to the ſame undoubted Truth, that the prophecy of *Moſes* was not till now fufilled, but had its utmoſt completion in *Jeſus*. And indeed this voice from Heaven, making ſuch an open Proclamation concerning *Jeſus*, before him that gave the Law, and before the chiefeſt of the Prophets who had aſſerted it, and being heard by them with the profoundeſt ſilence, without any contradiction; it did as good as tell the Apoſtles that they might be aſſured this was He of whom the Law and the Prophets had ſpoken, whom they were now to give ear unto; and that the Law and the Prophets muſt from henceforth give way to an higher Revelation from God, by this *Jeſus*. If this had not been true, we cannot but think that this

great

great Zealot *Elias*, who had been always ſo *jealous for the Lord of hoſts*, (1 *Kings* xix. 14.) and this truſty ſervant of God, *Moſes*, who was ſo *faithful in all his houſe* (xii. *Num.* 7.) would have preſently entred their proteſtation againſt it; and required the Apoſtles in the Name of God, to give heed only to their voice, but not to this. Which now might the rather be believed to come from Heaven, becauſe theſe inſpired perſons reverence it, and dare not venture in the leaſt to ſpeak againſt it; when they were highly concerned ſo to do, if it had not been the voice of God.

And if any one ſhall ask, how theſe Diſciples could tell that theſe two were *Moſes* and *Elias*, whom they never ſaw; I think *Theophylact* hath well reſolved it: that they knew them not by their faces, but by their diſcourſe. Certain it is that perſons living in far diſtant Countries, known to others merely by their works and manner of writing, have, after a little converſe at an unexpected meeting, been challenged by the Names that their Books carried, without the help of any noted character in their face to diſtinguiſh them. Nothing is more common than the

ſtory of *Eraſmus*, whom his Friend here in *England* greeted by his name, after a few repartees paſs'd between them, though he had never ſeen him, and little thought then to embrace him. Now we are expreſly told by all the *three* Evangeliſts, that *Moſes and Elias talked with Jeſus*; and by S. *Luke*, that their diſcourſe was concerning his *deceaſe* or departure out of this world, which he ſhould accompliſh at *Jeruſalem*: and conſequently, it is very probable, of the glory that was to follow it by his Reſurrection. Which conference the Apoſtles hearing, they might eaſily know, though not απ' εικονων, by their pictures, which many of that Nation held it unlawful to be made, yet ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων, from their words and diſcourſe (wherein either *Jeſus* or they, before it was done, had occaſion to mention their Names or their offices, or to deſcribe their perſons) that they were none elſe but thoſe two men, who then appeared to them. And it is poſſible, as *Theophylact* adds, that *Moſes* might ſay, I acknowledge thee to be the perſon, whoſe death I prefigured, by the Lamb which was ſlain at the Paſſeover: And *Elias* might joyn with him and ſay, Thou art He whoſe Reſurrection I did likewiſe fore-

fore-ſhow, by calling again the Widow's ſon to life. Some ſuch kind of diſcourſe we may reaſonably conceive paſſed between them, whereby they diſcovered themſelves to be, the one the Law-giver, the other the nobleſt of all the Prophets: who now came to wait upon *Jeſus*, and acknowledge that he was greater than they; as the voice from Heaven preſently teſtified, which declared him the *beloved Son of God*, to whom now all muſt attend, as they had formerly done to them.

And therefore it is very remarkable (which is the laſt thing I ſhall obſerve) that no ſooner was this voice heard, but *Moſes* and *Elias* vaniſhed and were ſeen no more. As much as to ſay, That *Jeſus* alone was now to be *heard*; the Law and the Prophets were gone, and had nothing to do, but only to ſerve him. So S. *Mark* relates, ix. 8. that *ſuddenly when they had looked round about* (after the hearing of this voice) *they ſaw no man any more, ſave Jeſus only with themſelves.* They turned their eyes every way to look for *Moſes* and *Elias*, but there was no further news of them. Nay, S. *Luke* tells us, ix. 36. that in the very uttering of the voice from that Heavenly glory, they diſappeared. So

those words, ἐν τῷ γενέσθαι τὴν φωνὴν, plainly signifie, *While the voice was speaking, Jesus was found alone.* The clould out of which it came, covered them and took them into it. At the same time it opened it self, to manifest him and to obscure them: that it might be evident the voice spake of him alone and none else; there being no body but He to be seen by his Disciples, when it came forth from the presence of God. So you read in all the Evangelists, that the cloud which appeared, *over-shadowed them (viz. Moses* and *Elias)* whereupon *the Disciples were afraid* (as S. *Luke* tells us, ix. 34.) *as they* (that is, *Moses* and *Elias) entred into the cloud:* imagining it is like that it would approach nearer, and spread it self over them; who dreaded to enter into it, as they saw those two persons did. But there was no danger; it only parted *Moses* and *Elias* from *Jesus*, and left him alone, and then came the voice out of that cloud, where *Moses* and *Elias* were with God, giving their assent to what it said, *This is my beloved Son, hear him. Him*, I say, *Non Mosen jam & Eliam* (as *Tertullian** I now observe interprets it) *Not Moses and Elias; who were shown*, as his language is, *in the prerogative of brightness, and then dismissed, as being now discharged*

* L. 4. adv. Marc. C. 22.

charged both of their office and of their honour.

Thus I have briefly explained the *ſecond* Teſtimony which God the Father gave him, in the audience of three of his Diſciples; who had a viſion alſo, at the ſame time, of the glory wherein he was to ſhine, after his departure out of this world. To which teſtimony, our Saviour would not have thoſe Diſciples, as yet to add theirs: but to keep this as a ſecret till he was *riſen again from the dead*, xvii. *Matth.* 9. It was fit for the *Father* alone to ſpeak *now*, from whom they were to learn what *Jeſus* was: that being fully ſatisfied *they* might be the better able to ſpeak of him *then*, upon their own knowledge; who had been eye and ear-witneſſes of the *honour and glory which he received from God the Father, when there came ſuch a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed. And this voice* (S. *Peter* I told you openly avers, 2 i. 17, 18.) *he and others heard, when they were with him in the holy mount.*

But if any one ſhould be ſo ſuſpicious and diſtruſtful, as to think that the Teſtimony of three perſons is not ſufficient, to beget

beget belief in us of such a wonderful thing as this is, that God declared *Jesus* to be his Son; though there is no just reason to doubt of any thing that is established out of the mouth of but two good witnesses, yet such was the condescension of God the Father Almighty, that he was pleased a little before our Saviours decease, which *Moses* and *Elias* spake of, to give his testimony to him again, and to declare this more publickly, which was shortly to be proclaimed in all the world.

III.

For this *Third* voice which the Father was pleased to send from Heaven, to bear witness to him, was not heard by so few as two or three, but by a great multitude of people; which makes our belief of this Truth to rely still upon surer grounds. For you read in the xii. *John* 1, 2, *&c.* that a great company of people having heard what a miracle our Saviour had wrought upon *Lazarus*, whom he raised from the dead a little before at a neighbouring town; flockt out of *Jerusalem* to meet him, as he was coming thither to the feast of the Passeover. And being convinced that he was *that King of Israel*

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whom the Lord by his Prophets had promiſed to ſend in his name, they met him with Palms of joy and triumph in their hands, And with the loudeſt acclamations of praiſe in their mouths; ſpreading their garments alſo in the way (as other Evangeliſts tell us) to do him the greater honour, and wiſhing him all proſperity in his new Kingdom. In this croud, or among the reſt of the people who were come to worſhip at the feaſt, there were *certain Greeks*, as you read *ver.* 20. who were deſirous *to ſee Jeſus*, whom the multitude thus magnified; and, it is likely, wiſh'd to have ſome proof given them, that he was ſuch a perſon as fame reported him.

Now the firſt thing our Saviour anſwers to thoſe who preſented them to him (which muſt be diligently noted) is that ere long He *ſhould be glorified*. But firſt he muſt take the Croſs in his way, and then the glory he ſhould attain thereby would be exceeding great; for his death would produce moſt precious fruit, and be the means of enlarging his Kingdom, and bringing innumerable ſuch Gentiles as theſe were, unto God, *ver.* 23, 24. And thereupon He perſwades his Diſciples

(*ver.*

(*ver.* 25, 26.) to adventure their lives, according to his example, for the good of mankind; which would redound also very much to their own honour. As they might see already in *Moses* and *Elias* (who appeared, S. *Chrysostom* thinks, for this end among others, to strengthen and encourage their Christian resolution in their sufferings*) but should be more fully satisfied when they saw him ascend to that glory after his sufferings, of which they had beheld but a shadow, when those two illustrious persons came to wait upon him. A difficult work indeed it was, at the thoughts of which He himself could not but be something sad (*ver.* 27.) and wisht, according to the inclinations of Nature, there were some other way, if God pleased, to deliver mankind. But since he had sent him into the world for this end, that he should lay down his life for our Redemption, he resolves presently to submit to God, and desires only this one thing of him, *ver.* 28. *Father, glorifie thy Name.* As much as to say, I know thou art my *FATHER*, and since it is thy pleasure, to which I will always submit; behold, I offer my self now to be an instrument of thy glory by my passion, as I have been hitherto by my preaching, and the

* Παραπλησίως ἡμῖν καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις διαλεγόμενος τὰ μείζονα. *Hom. 56. in Matth.*

the works thou haſt done by my hands. I am content to receive the glory which I expect, and juſt now told my Diſciples I ſhall receive, in this way of humble ſuffering thy will and pleaſure. I am deſirous *thou* ſhouldeſt firſt be glorified; and if my death will ſerve that end, I am ready to part with my life, for I know thou wilt be much more glorified by my Reſurrection and Aſcenſion to Heaven. There is no reaſonable doubt to be made of the truth of this interpretation; for they *glorifie God* moſt remarkably who die for the teſtimony of the Truth, xxi. *John* 19. It is a great honour to him, that they love him more than their lives, and will take his word for their recompenſe, in an inviſible world. This our Saviour himſelf calls, *Gods being glorified in him*, xiii. *John* 31. and therefore I make no queſtion he deſires here, that his Fathers Name may be glorified by the ſame means.

Now to this humble requeſt of his, God the Father replies, by a voice from Heaven, ſaying, *I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again.* You remember what S. *Peter* ſays in the place often cited already, 2 i. 17. that our Lord by the former voice from Heaven, *received honour and*

glory

glory from God the Father; and there is as much cause to think that in this there was the same design, to do him honour by a declaration of the glory he should shortly receive, at the right hand of God. The very connexion of these words with the foregoing, will not let us expound them otherwise. For having told his Disciples, the *Son of man should shortly be glorified*, but first he must *glorifie God* by his passion, and then he doubted not but *God would glorifie him with himself* (as he speaks, xiii. 32.) that is, by the very same means, glorifie both himself and his Son, who had glorified him before, says God himself from Heaven, *I have both glorified my Name* (by what he had done for *Jesus*, and by him) *and will glorifie it again*, by that which remained still to be done.

And indeed (1.) It did him a great honour, that God was pleased to return any answer to him, who had before called himself *his Son* (x. 36.) and had just now addressed himself to him as his Father; calling upon him twice by this Name, *Father, save me from this hour*, ver. 27. *Father, glorifie thy Name*, ver. 28. It was as much as to say, He owned the relation, allowed his pretences, and intended to

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justifie them more and more by his Divine approbation. For (2.) the Answer it self is a plain promise of the honour he would confer upon him hereafter, by his Resurrection and Exaltation; when he *again glorified himself*, by glorifying the Lord *Jesus*. You read expresly in the foregoing Chapter, that the Glory he had gotten *before*, was by glorifying of his Son; for he says (xi. 4.) the sickness of *Lazarus* was *for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby*. And therefore when he says he will glorifie himself *again*, the meaning is, that as they had *seen his glory* (xi. 40.) in the raising of *Lazarus* from the dead, and in all the other miraculous works which *Jesus* had done, for which the people gave him glory (v. *Luke* 26. vii. 16. xix. 37.) So he would glorifie himself more by the Resurrection of *Jesus* himself from the dead, and by his Exaltation to an Heavenly Kingdom. For it was the *working of the might of his power* (as the Apostle S. *Paul* speaks, i. *Ephes.* 19.) which he *wrought in Christ, when the Father of glory raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the Heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but al-*

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so in that which is to come. Now he *glorified his Son Jesus* indeed, as S. *Peter* speaks, iii. *Acts* 13. *and gave him a name which is above every name,* that every knee should bow to him, and every tongue confess him to be the Lord: but it was *to the glory of God the Father,* as S. *Paul* tells us expressly, ii. *Philip.* 11. Hereby he *glorified his own name,* as by this voice from Heaven he said he would; whose power, goodness, and wisdom, will be for ever magnified and celebrated with the highest praises, by the whole Christian Church, for setting such a glorious Prince over them, who is not *ashamed to call them Brethren,* and yet hath *all things put in subjection under his feet*; that he may protect, succour and bless them, here and eternally.

Now by making this promise to the Lord *Jesus,* of glorifying himself by glorifying him, in this manner: He plainly bare witness to him, that he was what he pretended to be; very dear to him, his only begotten Son, and no deceiver, as they falsely and blasphemously said, who were loth to be governed by him. They ought presently to have glorified God, by honouring his Son, and acknowledging him for their Lord and Master: who

had

had ſuch power with God already, that he would give him whatſoever he askt (xi. *John* 22.) and was ſhortly to receive greater, even all power in Heaven and in Earth, xvii. 1, 2.

For this voice, you may obſerve, was uttered at ſuch a time, and ſo loud, that the people who ſtood by heard it, *ver.* 29. Thoſe who were at ſome diſtance indeed, hearing only the ſound, thought it had been a clap of thunder: but they who were nearer, heard it ſo diſtinctly, that they were of opinion, *an Angel ſpake to him.* God, that is, by the Miniſtry of an Angel. For what is ſaid in one place of Scripture to be done by Angels, who are his principal ſervants, is in another ſaid to be done by God. As *the Angel of the Lord* we read, vii. *Acts* 30. *appeared to Moſes in the buſh*, and in the next verſe, it is the *voice of the Lord* which from thence is ſaid to come to him. In like manner the *Angel* is ſaid (*ver.* 38.) to *ſpeak with him in mount Sinai*; where, we are told in the book of *Exodus* xix. 20. the *Lord came down and called Moſes up to the top of the Mount*, and there ſpake to him; as here he did to our Saviour. Who tells the people it was not for his ſake, that God

ſpake now to him; it was for theirs; whom he would have to know that when he was *lifted up from the Earth* (by hanging upon the Croſs, which was a ſtep, contrary to all mens opinion, to his Exaltation in the Heavens) *he would draw all men to him*: bring even the Gentile world into ſubjection to him, and bow their hearts to acknowledge his Divine authority, which the *Jews* oppoſed. He needed no further confirmation of this truth himſelf, who knew how dear he was to God, and that he would *glorifie his Name* in him; but that his Diſciples might be more confident of it, and the people more inclined to believe it when they heard it preached, God ſpake the very ſame now in the ears of a great many, which he had done before to him and a few beſides in the former voices from Heaven.

It is true indeed, He is not called here *Gods beloved Son*, in expreſs terms, as he is in the other places. But this is ſo plainly ſuppoſed, and ſtrongly inferr'd, as I ſaid, from the voice which now ſpake, that it puts the matter out of doubt, as much as the former. If he had falſely and proudly laid claim to this high relation to God, whom he calls his Father, we may

may be confident God would never have honoured him with ſuch an anſwer; but either have been ſilent, or ſaid the quite contrary: telling him, before all the company, that he would not glorifie himſelf by preferring, but by putting to ſhame ſuch an one as he, who thus arrogantly took upon him to be the Son of God. It is contrary to all reaſon to think that God would ſtoop to *ſeek the glory* of any perſon (as our Saviour expreſſes the honour he had done him, viii. *John* 50.) but one who ſtood ſo nearly related to him, as to be his Son: and therefore worthy to be glorified by him again and again, until He had fully *judged*, as he there ſpeaks, between Him and his Adverſaries; who denied him to be the Chriſt, but was pronounced by God to be the Prince of life.

To conclude this, you may note that not long before God ſpake in this manner from Heaven to them, our Saviour had ſaid, That they *had not heard his voice* at any time, v. *John* 37. *John* the Baptiſt had, and ſo had three of his Diſciples. And therefore *John* bare witneſs of him; *whoſe teſtimony*, he ſays, *was true* (*ver.* 32.) though he did not ſtand in ſuch need of it, as if his credit could not be ſuppor-

ted without it. No, He appealed to him merely becauſe they had ſuch an high opinion of him, *ver.* 33, 34. otherwiſe he *had a greater teſtimony than that of John* (*ver.* 36.) which was not only the *works that he did, which teſtified of him, that the Father had ſent him*: but *the Father himſelf who ſent him* (note this, for he appeals now to what the voice from Heaven ſaid) *he has born witneſs of him, ver.* 37. And if they had had any goodneſs in them (*ver.* 38.) they would have received him *whom the Father ſent.* When did He ſend him, but when he ſpake by that voice from Heaven? which now he utters once more in other words, for their greater and fuller ſatisfaction, when many of them were aſſembled together; that they, who had not hitherto, might hear his voice as well as *Jeſus* himſelf and his Apoſtles; and be awakened hereby to attend to what the other witneſſes of him ſhould ſay, eſpecially after he was riſen from the dead.

I ſhould paſs now to the Examination of one of them, were it not fit, before I part with this, to take notice of a Tradition which runs among the *Jews*, concerning this way of Revelation *by a voice* from Heaven; which they ſay was very uſual

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in thoſe ages. *The Doctors deliver* (ſo their words are in the *Babylonian Talmud* *) *that from the death of the latter Prophets, Haggai, Zachariah and Malachy, the Holy Ghoſt was taken away: but yet notwithſtanding they had the Miniſtry of the Bath Col, i. e.* the daughter of a voice. By that name they call this way of Revelation, becauſe they ſay it was not a full and ſtrong voice which they heard, but a voice coming out of another voice, and heard when it was gone. Juſt as ſparks, ſay they, are called *Bene reſheph*, the ſons of an hot coal, becauſe they leap out of the fire; ſo is this called the *daughter of a voice*, becauſe it reſulted from a voice, and came, as it were, out of the womb of it: being a kind of Eccho after ſomething that was ſpoken, which they could not underſtand; but only caught hold of this tail, as I may call it, and concluſion of it. And they would have us believe, that as under the firſt Temple they had the benefit of *Prophecy*, *Urim and Thummim*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*; ſo this ſucceeded them under the ſecond Temple, and was proper to that age of the world: being then only in uſe, when all the other were wanting. Hence many Chriſtian writers of theſe latter times, have fancied that God there-

* In the title *Sanhedrim*, cap. 1.

fore declared *Jesus* to be his Son by a voic
from Heaven, because it was the only wa
wherein he then communicated his min
to the *Jewish* Nation. *Paulus Fagius*
think was the first that started this notio
of the *Bath col*: which was *a præludium*
imagines to that true, Divine and Heaven-
ly voice, which was to speak to them indee
from Heaven; that is, our Lord Jesu
Christ. To whom the Bath col it self gav
testimony, when it said, This is my belove
Son in whom I am well pleased. But t
name shows it was not the true voice fro
Heaven, but a mere type, signification an
testimony of that true voice and word of Go
which was to come shortly and speak to them
To whom alone this Bath col told them the
must all hearken. Thus he writes upon th
Chaldee Paraphrase *. And he had sai
the same before in his notes upon the *Fift*
Chapter of *Pirke Avoth*, where his word
are, that *God would accustom the world*
little by this beginning, to that true Heaven-
ly voice, our Saviour Christ, who was to fol-
low; in whom hereafter the Father would b
heard.

* In xxviii. Exod. 30.

But I think there is reason to doubt o
all that the *Jews* say about this matter
their brags being many times beyond the
Truth

Truth, and deviſed to obſcure the glory of our Saviour. Who it is moſt likely had that honour done him now by theſe voices from Heaven, which was not uſual in thoſe days; for he himſelf tells them, as I obſerved before, *Ye have not heard his voice at any time*, v. *John* 37. As for that which they pretend, that this *Bath col*, or daughter of a voice was peculiar to the times of the ſecond Temple, it is ſo far from Truth, that it is contradicted by ſome of themſelves: who find inſtances of the contrary in the Holy Books. God called out of Heaven to *Abraham*, every body knows, by his Angel, *Gen.* xxii. 11, 15. And *Maimonides* * obſerves, that he ſpake to *Hagar* and *Manoah*'s wife; though neither of them, he ſays, had any thing of the ſpirit of prophecy, but only heard the *Bath col*. Which interpoſed, if we could believe others, in the caſe of *Thamar*. And often whiſpered to *Moſes*, as the writer of his Life, in many places, affirms. Nay, they tell us in the *Eleventh* Chapter of the forenamed Title in the *Talmud*, that *Nebuzaradan* heard this *Bath col* (before the deſtruction of the firſt Temple) bidding him make a freſh aſſault upon *Jeruſalem*, and not be diſcouraged in his attempt, nor fear the fate of *Senacherib*;

* *Mor Nevoch. part* 2. *cap.* 42.

For the time is at hand that the Sanctuary ſhall be deſtroyed, and the Temple burnt.

But that there was any ſuch thing under the ſecond Temple, I ſee no ground at all to believe. It is far more probable that they have deviſed a number of ſuch ſtories as we read in their Books, merely to gain ſome credit and reputation to their Doctors. Can any man of ſence imagine that God would bid *Jonathan* hold his hand when he was beginning to Paraphraſe upon the Prophets; ſaying to him by a voice from Heaven, *Who is this that reveals my ſecrets to the ſons of men?* And that he, like a bold fellow, ſtood up and ſaid, *I am the man, who undertake it for thy honour, and not my own?* And yet *Elias Levita* has the confidence to tell us, in his Preface to theſe Paraphraſes, that as *Jonathan* was going to do as much for the *Holy writings* (as they call them) as he had done for the *Prophets*, he was abſolutely prohibited by another voice from Heaven, which ſaid, *Is it not ſufficient that thou haſt divulged the myſteries of the Prophets, but thou wilt proſtitute alſo the ſecrets of the Holy Ghoſt?* So the good man deſiſted, and durſt not do the Angels any further ſervice; who came to liſten to him as he was expounding

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the Prophets. Which is as true, I make no doubt, as all the reſt: and we may as well believe the *Earth quaked for forty mile together*, when he began his Paraphraſe, and that if a fly did but ſit upon his Book in which he wrote, *fire came down from Heaven* and deſtroyed it, leaving the Book untoucht, as believe a ſyllable of theſe voices ſpeaking from Heaven to him, for they have all the very ſame Authors. Who having got this by the end, know not when to have done with it; but tell us for the honour of *R. Chanina*, who ſaw the deſtruction of the laſt Temple by *Titus*, that a voice came from Heaven, which ſaid (as *David Ganz* reports it in his Chronology *) *The whole world is ſuſtained for the ſake of R. Chanina my ſon.* A very likely matter, that he ſhould lay an obligation on ſo many, and no body know it but this obſcure writer. Why did not all the world follow *him*, as they did *Jeſus*, if he were God's Son, and they ſo much indebted to him? This is but a wretchedly dull counterfeit of what they had read of our Saviour, who was *Gods Son, Upholding all things by the word of his power*, 1. *Hebr.* 2, 3. And ſo are the other tales they tell in the Talmudical Title ſo often named, Chapter the firſt, of a *Bath col* which came from

* *Ad An.* 4768.

from Heaven as the wiſe men ſat in Council at *Jericho*, ſaying, *There is one here who is worthy that the Divine majeſty or glory* (by which they mean ſometime the *Holy Ghoſt*) *ſhould reſt upon him, as it did on Moſes; but the age wherein he lives is not worthy of that favour.* Whereupon they all caſt their eyes on *Hillel* a famous man among them. And of another voice as they were ſitting together at *Jafne*, which ſaid the very ſame words again; and turned all their eyes towards R. *Samuel* the leſs. And, to name but one more, *R. Juda* the *Holy* Doctor, they would have it believed, was aſſured by this voice from Heaven, that his Prayer was heard, juſt as our Saviours was in the place I have before open'd. For when he was dying (and it was not many days before our Saviour's death, that he prayed in thoſe words, *Father, glorifie thy name*) *he lift up his ten fingers and ſaid, Lord of the world, it is known to thee that I have laboured in the Law with my ten fingers, and have not received the leaſt advantage thereby, no not in my little finger. May it pleaſe thee, that I may have peace in my reſt.* And then out came the *Bath col* ſaying thoſe words of *Iſaiah* lvii. 2. *He ſhall enter into peace: they ſhall reſt in their beds.* Which, together with all other

other of the ſame kind, deſerve to be put under no other *Title*, than that of the *Jewiſh Fables* (mentioned by S. *Paul*, 1. *Tit.* 14.) or *old-Wives tales* (1 *Tim.* iv. 7.) wherewith little children are wont to be entertained: being invented, it is likely, in imitation of the Goſpel ſtory, to adorn and ſupport the ruinous doctrine of their Rabbins, and to bring it into ſome eſteem with their ſottiſh poſterity.

But we may as well believe the idle tale which the factious *Donatiſts* told concerning the Father of their Sect; *to whom God gave an anſwer from Heaven*, they ſaid, as he was praying to him: as give ear to this Fable of *R. Judah*, who muſt be magnified by them becauſe he was the compiler of their traditional Law. And as for *R. Samuel* the leſs, whom I mentioned before, he was the man who compoſed the famous Prayer againſt Hereticks for their publick Devotions; wherein they deſire God that he would *deſtroy all Hereticks*: whereby they mean Chriſtians, who began in thoſe days to grow apace. And therefore it is no wonder that he is cried up to the skies, and muſt be honoured with praiſes from Heaven. But the beſt of it is, theſe petty ſtories want vouchers; or thoſe

Auguſt. Tract. 13. in Joban.

thoſe who offer themſelves had need to bring ſome better men to be bound for their honeſty. They have no *John* Baptiſts to atteſt any thing, much leſs ſuch men as the Apoſtles, who with the power of Miracles and Prophecy, were ready on all occaſions to pawn their lives, that they did not *follow cunningly deviſed Fables*, when *they made known the power and coming of our Lord Jeſus, but were eye-witneſſes*, as you have heard, *of his Majeſty, and heard the voice when they were with him in the holy Mount, which ſaid, This is my well beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* Thoſe *Maſters* in *Iſrael* alſo are not ſo *cunning* in their contrivances, nor ſuch maſters of their craft, but they forget the old Rule which admoniſhes *a Lyar to have a good memory.* For they contradict themſelves, while they tell us this *Bath col* was but the fag end of a voice, a kind of Echo leaping out of another voice; and yet make it deliver ſuch long ſentences. And what likelihood is there that God ſhould grace ſuch men as they, who had turned their Religion into vain janglings and idle diſputes (witneſs the quarrel between the School of that *Hillel* now mentioned, and the School of *Schammai*) with ſuch *Elogiums* from Heaven, as were fit to be given only

only to the beſt of men, yea, to the Son of God himſelf?

One of theſe *four* things is far more probable. Either that their latter writers have ſtrained the words of their forefathers too far, who meant perhaps no more by their hearing a *Bath col*, but that the thing whereof they write, was as evident to them, as if they had had a Divine teſtimony for it. For in *Pirke Avoth* I obſerve *R. Joſhuah* ſays, that *jotzeth Bath col, the daughter of a voice goeth forth day by day from mount Horeb, and proclaims, ſaying, Wo to men becauſe of their contempt of the Law.* Which can ſignifie no more, but that if men would liſten to the Law which God gave there, they would hear how dangerous it is to diſobey it. Or, *ſecondly*, there was ſomething of a conjuration in it. For in *Pirke Elieſer* I find *, that when there was a diſpute only about the Leap-year, the Governour of the School pronounced the Name with four Letters, and preſently they heard a voice, ſaying, *The Lord ſpake to Moſes and Aaron*, &c. As if they could have this voice, whenſoever they did but pronounce that ſingle word. Or, *thirdly*, they were men of a ſtrong imagination, which made them

* *Chap.* 8.

them fancy they heard a voice from Heaven, when it was only a blaſt of melancholy fumes and vapours whiſtling in their brain. For this may be a fair account of thoſe, who thought, as ſome among us have done, that they heard ſuch or ſuch a place of Scripture ſounding in their ears, as an anſwer to their prayers or their doubts. Or, *laſtly*, there being many *Jews* in our Saviours time and afterward, who knew very well what had been reported of him, but yet continued ſworn enemies to his Religion; they ventured to report the ſame of their own Doctors, and perſwaded the people that they were approved by voices from Heaven, and therefore ought to be received by all poſterity as men of a Divine ſtamp, who had the higheſt teſtimony from Almighty God.

This I am ſure of, there is nothing to make it credible that any man among them in thoſe Ages was thus honoured by God. No body appears that dare ſay they heard it. Nor does any of them pretend that they ſaw theſe *Rabbies* ſhine in the leaſt glimpſe of ſuch glory as our Saviour did, when he was honoured with that glorious teſtimony from Heaven, which pronounced him the Head of all principality

lity and power. Much leſs were they, as S. *Luke* ſpeaks, by *many infallible proofs* (for we rely not upon the voice from Heaven by it ſelf alone) declared to be the men of God. And therefore, that which to me ſeems neareſt to the truth in this matter is, that there had been a perfect, deep ſilence ſince the death of the latter Prophets, and no Revelation made of Gods mind, of any ſort whatſoever, in that Nation, till *John* the Baptiſt came, who was filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſent by God in the ſpirit and power of *Elias* to prepare the way of our Lord. Who when he firſt appeared had ſuch an approbation given him by God the Father, in the audience of *John*, as had not been vouchſafed to any perſon; and in ſuch a manner (by a voice from Heaven) as had not been in uſe for many ages; but yet was the moſt ancient way of his communicating his mind to men. Thus God called to *Adam* in the Garden, and thus he ſpake to *Abraham*, and *Moſes*, and *Samuel*; and therefore ſo he now ſpeaks to him who was the *ſecond Adam*, the true *ſeed* promiſed to *Abraham*, the Prophet like to *Moſes*: Teſtifying both to him and to others by his own voice from Heaven (which was the old way of Revelation before

fore all others, and a clearer way there cannot be) that he was his only begotten Son.

And here perhaps it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that this voice anciently was very low, like a ſmall whiſper in ones ear: whereas the voice to our Saviour was loud and ſtrong, making a great noiſe in the ears of thoſe that heard it. So *Eliphaz* tells us, iv. *Job* 16. that in a viſion which he had, *There was ſilence, and I heard a voice.* The *Hebrew* is exactly rendred by *Mercer*, *I heard ſilence and a voice*; that is, a ſtill voice, as the Margin of our Bible hath it. And ſo *Elias* is ſaid to hear a *voice of ſilence*, 1 *Kings* xix. 12. *a ſtill ſmall voice*, as we render it; a ſpeech next to ſilence, which did but whiſper very low, and made no noiſe at all in his ears. On the contrary you read in the place laſt expounded (xii. *John*) the voice which ſpake of our Saviour was ſo loud and audible, that the people, who were at ſome diſtance, thought it had been a clap of thunder. It did not ſilently creep into their ears, but rent the clouds to make its way with a great deal of power and force into them. I cannot ſay that the other voice was ſo loud, which the Diſciples heard on the

holy

holy Mount, but it was ſo clear and piercing, that when they heard it (xvii. *Matth.* 6.) they were aſtoniſhed, and fell flat upon their faces. The light wherein he appeared was not more viſible than the voice which teſtified to him was audible; and both were very amazing. Which may very well denote the excellency of our Saviours perſon, and the efficacy of his doctrine, above all that had been before him. He declared Gods mind more fully and perfectly, and ſpake it more plainly and perſpicuouſly. He tranſcended all others in both theſe, as much as a full voice is above a little murmur or whiſper in the ear; or a ſpeech diſtinctly pronounced, is to be preferred before the liſping of imperfect words.

But whatſoever become of this, we may certainly conclude from the audibleneſs and clearneſs of the voice, whereby God gave his teſtimony to *Jeſus*, that they are the more to be believed, who affirm they heard this voice from Heaven and report it to us; it not being eaſie for them to be deceived. This voice was like that of an Herald who proclaims a Prince; and it ſaid, in effect, *I have ſet my King upon my holy hill of Sion, Thou art my Son, this*

day have I begotten thee. Which had a moſt eminent and full completion at his Reſurrection and Exaltation; but began to be fulfilled when he was tranſigured upon this *holy hill*, and had a repreſentation of his future glory made to him. Which he did not aſſume to himſelf, as the Apoſtle diſcourſes, v. *Hebr.* 4, 5. but was called unto it by him that ſaid *then, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; and ſaid *now, This is my well beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear him.*

And thus you ſee, having made an enquiry into the Teſtimony of one of theſe *Witneſſes*, the *firſt* and greateſt, we find it ſo full and clear on his behalf, that we muſt either disbelieve God, or elſe believe in *Jeſus*, and receive him for the Son of God. For he received more than once *honour and glory* from God the Father. Who was ſo highly *glorified alſo by Him*, that he hath now completely *glorified him with himſelf*, and therefore expects that his Name ſhould be perpetually glorified and praiſed by us, in ſome ſuch words as theſe.

A Prayer.

ADored be thy love, O Lord of Heaven and Earth, adored be thy great and wonderful love, which hath thus glorified thy Son Jeſus; *and given us ſuch abundant ſatisfaction, that in him thou art well pleaſed. Lord, what is man that thou ſhouldeſt ſpeak from Heaven, with ſo much kindneſs to him! that thou ſhouldeſt ſo often tell us, thou haſt ſent thy dearly beloved Son, in great humility to viſit us! what an amazing love is this, that thou ſhouldeſt admit any of us into ſuch a familiarity with thy ſelf, as to hear thy voice, and behold the brightneſs of thy glory? Our heart ought to anſwer thee again, with the voice of joy, thankſgiving and praiſe. Thy high praiſes ought to be in all our mouths. It becomes us to ſay continually, with the moſt elevated minds and hearts, Glory be to thee, O Lord; Glory be to thee, O Lord: who dwelleſt on high, and yet humbleſt thy ſelf to behold the things that are in Heaven and in Earth. For ever be thy Name glorified by us and by all mankind; who haſt honoured our*

Nature so highly in the person of thy only begotten Son Christ Jesus: *whom after thou hadst several ways glorified on Earth, thou hast now advanced to the Throne of thy glory in Heaven.*

The hearts of all mankind, with all the love they have, is too small a Sacrifice to be offered unto thee: whose love is like thy self, far beyond all that we are able to express. O that our love and affection to thee were so likewise! a most grateful resentment of thy kindness to us, greater than can be uttered! O that our minds and wills, to make some poor expressions of their thankfulness, may most humbly bow themselves and perfectly stoop to thee; who hast thus graciously condescended unto us! That we may, with the most thankful hearts, receive thy testimony concerning thy Son! sincerely reverence him as our Lord and Saviour! and obediently hearken to his voice; believing his Revelations, following his Instructions; submitting to his Precepts, and rejoycing for ever in the comfort of his precious Promises.

There is all reason that we should thus study to approve our selves to thee. And it is our interest also to be careful to fulfil all righteousness *as our Saviour did: That we may have*

have the teſtimony of a good Conſcience at preſent, and a joyful hope to be openly commended and praiſed by thee hereafter; when we ſhall hear that voice of the King of glory, calling to us, and ſaying, Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. *Amen.*

CHAP. III.

Concerning the Teſtimony of the WORD.

IT is time now to proceed to the Examination of the next Witneſs, which is the WORD, and to weigh the evidence which He gives concerning *Jeſus*: that is, concerning him who was born of the bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, and called by that Name; who ſaid, He was the *Son of God*. I make no doubt but we ſhall find his teſtimony as full and as ſtrong as the former to verifie this; when we have in a few words (according to my intended brevity) declared, who this WORD is, who now comes and deſires to be heard as a Witneſs for *Jeſus*.

And we are told by this very Apoſtle in the firſt Verſe of his Goſpel, that the WORD is a Divine being, which had

a ſubſiſtence in the beginning of all things. For he was then *with God*, the World was made by him, and therefore *He was God*. That is, God of God the Father; to whom "he hath ſuch a relation (to ſpeak in the "words of S. *Greg. Nazianzen*) as a word "or inward thought hath to the mind. "Not only in regard of his generation, "without any paſſion, but becauſe of his "intimate conjunction with Him, and of "his power to declare Him. For the Fa-"ther is known by the Son; who is a "brief and eaſie demonſtration of the na-"ture of the Father, as every thing that is "begotten is σιωπῶν λόγος, *the ſilent Word* "of that which begat it.

Διὰ τὸ συναϊδὲς καὶ τὸ ἐξαγγελτικόν. Orat. 36.

Now this WORD, whom the Ancients call the Eternal *Reaſon*, the *Wiſdom*, the *Power* of the Father, S. *John* there tells us, *ver.* 14. *was made fleſh*; and became ſo related to that Man who was born of the Bleſſed Virgin, as to dwell in Him, and be made one with Him. A myſtery, as *Gregory Thaumaturgus* excellently ſpeaks, which *is to be adored, not ſcrupulouſly and nicely weighed; to be diſcourſed of in Divine words, not meaſured by humane reaſons.* And therefore I ſhall ſay no more of it; but that from hence it is that afterward,

Προσκυνούμενον καὶ ζυγοστατούμενον, &c. Serm. 3. in Annunc.

the

the whole person *God-man* is called the WORD, as you read in the very entrance of this Epistle of S. *John*. Where the WORD is described to be such a person as may be *seen*, and *felt*, and *handled*, as well as *heard*. And He is very properly called by this Name, because it is his office to declare the mind and will of God to men (as we by our speech declare ours one to another) which otherways we could not know. *For no man hath seen God at any time* (i. John 18.) *the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

In these words we have a plain and full account, why our Lord *Jesus* is called the WORD of God. Not merely because he hath revealed to us the Counsel and the pleasure of God, for so did the ancient Prophets, and the holy Apostles: but *First*, because he was the *immediate Interpreter* of the Divine mind and will, as the word which we speak is of ours. For he was in the very *bosom of the Father*; that is, knew his mind not by the instructions of an Angel, not by Visions or Dreams, nor only by the Holy Ghost; but by a more intimate discovery of Gods counsels and purposes to him, as a person that was one with

with him. We cannot underſtand leſs by his being in his Fathers boſom: which is a phraſe that ſignifies He had the neareſt familiarity with Him, and was privy to his moſt ſecret counſels. Which He was able alſo to accompliſh and bring to paſs, and for that reaſon (which is the *ſecond*) may be called the WORD of God. Becauſe he hath ſuch a power in Heaven and Earth, that at his word or command all things are preſently done according to his will. For *Jeſus* being repreſented, you may obſerve, in a viſion to S. *John*, as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, clothed in a purple, *i. e.* a royal robe; is called by the name of
xix. Rev. 13 the *Word of God*; after he had done publiſhing God's mind and will, and was then only executing ſome of his Decrees, by that power which he hath at God's right hand. A power ſo great, that he can by his Word alone (as the Scripture ſpeaks in other caſes of God Almighty, xxxiii. *Pſalm* 6.) without any viſible means to effect it, compaſs his ends, and fulfil what he hath ſpoken either in his threats or promiſes. And *laſtly*, the Article before this Name, ὁ λόγος, *the* WORD, denotes Him to be the perſon to whom this Title ſo particularly and eminently belongs, that it can be given to none elſe. Becauſe

he

he hath moſt perfectly declared God's mind and will to us, and revealed to us all his ſecret purpoſes concerning us in the fulleſt manner that can be; and hath a power far ſurmounting all creatures, to do every thing as he hath declared.

And thus, I ſuppoſe, we are to take the word in this place; for the *WORD made fleſh*, that is, for *Jeſus* himſelf. Who manifeſted his own greatneſs and glory, as you have begun to diſcern already, and bare witneſs concerning himſelf in a very eminent and glorious manner, that he was the *Son of God*. But you muſt not expect that I ſhould here produce all the demonſtrations, which He gave of this Truth, from the time of his being *made fleſh* and coming to dwell among us. No, we are to conſider that the Apoſtle is now ſpeaking of thoſe *Witneſſes* which are *in Heaven*, and thence give their teſtimony: And therefore we muſt not, at preſent, ſeek for any evidences which He produced, while he was on Earth, to juſtifie his high Authority, which is comprehended under the Name of the *Son of God*; but enquire after thoſe only, which He hath given of it, ſince He went to Heaven, and aſcended to the Throne of his

his glory. From whence this *Word of God* hath been pleaſed to ſpeak, or in ſome very remarkable manner to aſſert this Truth, upon no leſs than *three* ſeveral occaſions.

I.

Firſt of all He ſhowed himſelf to his firſt Martyr S. *Steven*, in a ſenſible Majeſty; *ſtanding at the right hand of God*, in the ſplendor of the Divine glory. Read but the vii. *Acts* 55, 56. and there you will find He made himſelf ſo plainly appear to be *the Son of God*, and that *with power* (as S. *Paul* you have heard ſpeaks in i. *Rom.* 4.) that is, the King of Heaven and Earth, next to the moſt ſupreme Majeſty of God the Father Almighty) that nothing can be ſaid againſt it; unleſs any man will be ſo audacious as to fancy that this holy and glorious Martyr was ſtrongly deluded. But there is a clear demonſtration againſt that, from the whole ſtory of his Life and Death. For He was a man of great note and eminency in the Church; who held the very firſt place among the ſeven Deacons (vi. *Acts* 5.) that were choſen to attend the daily miniſtration to the poor. The feeding of whoſe bodies He did not think

think the only thing belonging to his charge; but ſuch was his zeal, he likewiſe broke and diſpenſed the Bread of life to all his neighbours. He juſtified the Chriſtian Faith (of which he was full, vi. *Acts* 5, 8, 10.) againſt all oppoſers; with ſingular wiſdom, great fervour and mighty demonſtrations, by the power of the holy Ghoſt. He confounded all thoſe whom he diſputed withall, though he could not overcome them. He ſtopt their mouths by the *wiſdom and ſpirit* wherewith he ſpake: which made them wiſh they could ſtop his, though there was no other way, they ſaw, to ſilence him, but by taking away his life. They ſuborned therefore falſe witneſſes againſt *him*, whom they knew not how to confute. They brought him before their Great Council to be tried. Where all his Judges fixing their eyes upon him, ſaw he was ſo far from being at all daunted, that there was a ſparkling Majeſty in his countenance, like that of an Angel when he appeared to their forefathers, vi. *Acts* 15. They could never deviſe or fancy any thing greater to ſay of them or of their moſt eminent Doctors, than now they beheld in this illuſtrious perſon. The face of the Patriarch *Iſaac*, they tell us, was ſo changed

ged when the holy Spirit reſted on him, that a Divine light or ſplendor came from his face. And they would have us believe that *Phineas* his countenance did burn and flame like a Torch, by the inhabitation of the holy Ghoſt in him. Nay, *Maimonides* himſelf (to omit the other Authors in which I find theſe reports) will have the Prophets to be Angels. So he interprets more than once, the *firſt* and the *fourth* verſes of the *ſecond* Chapter of the Book of *Judges*. Where by the *Angel of the Lord* he underſtands a Prophet whom God ſent to them, to bring them to repentance. And expreſly ſays * that their wiſe men have told them, *This was Phineas; for at that time when the Majeſty of God dwelt upon him, He was like to an Angel of the Lord.* And it is the opinion of ſome of them, whoſe Names are not worth mentioning, that in the Prophetical viſions, the form of a man vaniſhed, and the appearance of an Angel came in the room thereof, till ſuch time as the Viſion ceaſed. The light which ſhone within was ſo great, that it broke through their bodies, and externally appeared; if we could believe theſe Doctors, who would fain adorn their wiſe men with that glory, which they really beheld in this man of God

* *More Nevoch. part 2. cap. 42.*

God S. *Steven.* Who was ſo full of the holy Ghoſt, and had ſuch glorious illuminations in his mind, that there was indeed an amazing luſtre in his face, and he lookt more like an Angel than a man. This emboldened him to ſpeak to that grave Senate with all the aſſurance in the world; and to reprove them for reſiſting the holy Ghoſt. Which ſo cut them to the heart, that it enraged them to the higheſt degree of fury, and they lookt upon him as if they would eat him up. But he, ſtill full of the holy Ghoſt, and nothing fearing what he ſaw he muſt ſuffer from an exaſperated multitude, caſt up his eyes above, and faſtned them ſtedfaſtly upon the Heavens, from whence cometh our help. Where He bade them all take notice (vii. *Acts* 54, 55, 56.) that he *ſaw the glory of God* and *Jeſus* ſhining at his right hand in a far greater glory than they had ſeen in his face. That was only a glimpſe of the Majeſty of *Jeſus*, whom he preached to them; and now feared not to affirm that he ſaw in his royal ſplendour and greatneſs, incomparably above all the Angels in Heaven.

And is it not a great deal more reaſonable to believe that He indeed ſaw *Jeſus* there, than to think that he would obtrude thus

thus boldly a mere imagination upon them, with the certain loſs of his own life? If he had not been ſure that he beheld him whom they crucified, now moſt highly glorified, a perſon of his wiſdom and ſpirit would have been more cautious than to follow him in that bloudy path, to which this aſſertion led him; when, if he would have held his tongue, there lay a fairer and ſmoother way before him. But ſo viſible was the royal Majeſty of our Saviour, that he could not but proclaim it aloud, and *ſpeak*, as S. *Peter* ſaid, *the things which he had ſeen*: though he knew they would call it blaſphemy, and puniſh him for it with preſent death. He was willing to ſuffer that, for the honour of his Maſter, and to teſtifie his love to him: who told him his Faith was no fancy, as he might ſee by the glory wherein he appeared. Which abundantly ſatisfied him that he was the Son of the Higheſt; able to reward all his faithful ſervants with immortal glory. It is true, we read of never a word that our Lord ſpake to this Saint; but the ſplendour of his appearance in ſuch glory and Majeſty at God's right hand, was as ſignificant as any words could be: and bid him be aſſured of the truth of what S. *John* is here proving, that indeed

indeed he is the Chriſt, the anointed of God; anointed with the oil of gladneſs above all his fellows; made the Lord of all things; inferior to none but only him who hath put all things in ſubjection under his feet.

If any one ask me how he could *ſee the glory of God*, and how he knew this to be *Jeſus*, who appeared at *Gods right hand?* I Anſwer to the firſt enquiry, that He ſaw God's glory in the ſame ſence that others are ſaid to have ſeen God: who beheld ſome very bright appearance, an extraordinary light ſhining before their eyes, which excelled all that ever they had ſeen or could imagine, and was the token of the Divine preſence. Thus *Moſes was afraid to look upon God*, iii. *Exod.* 6. and the Elders of *Iſrael* are ſaid to *ſee the God of Iſrael*, xxiv. 20. which places *Maimonides* thinks are to be underſtood of the Viſion of God, with the eyes of the mind. But the Text is plainly againſt him, which tells us there was a viſible appearance of ſome unuſual, aſtoniſhing brightneſs. And therefore he confeſſes that if any man do conceive thoſe words are to be interpreted of ſome created light (as he ſpeaks *) that is, the viſible apparition of a Divine Majeſty,

* *More Nevoch. Part.* 1. *cap.* 5. and many other places.

jeſty, or of an Angel, there is no danger in ſuch an apprehenſion. And indeed no man can ſeriouſly read the Books of *Moſes*, but he will ſee plainly they ſpeak of a ſenſible glory, which was exceeding dazling, and ſometimes too great for the weak eyes of men to behold. I have deſcribed it before, when I told you it was nothing elſe but a flaming light, which ſhone from that amazing devouring Fire, which appeared in the cloud to the children of *Iſrael*. Thus *Abarbanel* expounds that place I mentioned before, xvi. *Exod.* 7. *In the morning, then ye ſhall ſee the glory of the Lord.* Which is not to be underſtood of the providing them bread or fleſh in an extraordinary manner; but of the *Fire which appeared to all the people, to reprove and puniſh them for their murmurings.* And ſo *Lyra* ſays, it was *an unuſual refulgent brightneſs or lightning, repreſenting the Divine power ready to chaſtiſe them for their mutiny* againſt his ſervants. And it is very common in the New Teſtament to call ſuch a great ſplendour by the name of glory. As the ſhining of *Moſes* his face is called by S. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* iii. 7. *the glory of his countenance.* And in the ſame ſtile he ſpeaks of the light of the Heavenly bodies when he ſays, 1 *Cor.* xv. 41. *There is one*

glory

glory of the Sun, another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another Star in glory: that is, in the brightneſs and ſplendour of its light.

Such a glory it was that now S. *Steven* beheld, but far more ſplendid, more pure and illuſtrious, than the light of the Sun or any other that has been mentioned; which was a repreſentation of the preſence of the Divine Majeſty, who uſed in this manner to make men ſenſible of his tranſcendent inviſible glory. And there, in the Divine preſence he ſaw our Lord, in the moſt high and honourable place, next to God the Father himſelf. For that's the meaning of his appearing at *the right hand of God*, or of that great *glory* he ſaw in the Heavens: the right hand being the principal place belonging to the Heir of the Crown, when he appears together with the King his Father. And therefore the Divine writer to the *Hebrews* ſays, there never was any Angel ſeen there. They only *ſtand* or miniſter *before God* or before his Throne; *but to which of them did he ſay at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy foot-ſtool?* i. *Hebr.* 13. This is the prerogative of Chriſt

alone, the great King, the Heir of all things; whoſe glory the *Pſalmiſt* deſcribes in that place (cx. *Pſal.* 1.) from whence theſe words are cited; that is, prophecies of his Kingly power in the Heavens, as S. *Paul* clearly expounds this phraſe of *ſitting at Gods right hand*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 25. *For he muſt reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.* He is a King, and he reigns, and he hath a Throne (i. *Hebr.* 8.) but when he is compared with God the Father Almighty, the fountain of all power and authority, and when he appears together with him; to ſhow that he reigns under him and for him, he is repreſented as ſitting at the *right hand of God*, or the right hand of the *Throne of God.* For ſo his Kingly power is expreſſed in other places, *He is ſet down on the right hand of the Throne of the Majeſty in the Heavens*, *Hebr.* viii. 1. xii. 2. that is, He reigns together with God the Father in the Celeſtial glory. For the *throne of God* ſignifying in the Scripture phraſe (as the forenamed *Maimonides* obſerves) that place where God's Majeſty manifeſts it ſelf in a viſible ſplendour and glory: the ſitting of our Saviour at the right hand of that Throne, or that glory denotes nothing elſe, but his being ſeated in the higheſt honour

honour that can be given to any one in the Heavenly places: next in greatneſs, power and majeſty to God himſelf, under whom he is the King of Angels, and Men, and all Creatures. There was nothing of which this holy Martyr was more aſſured. To whom this Heavenly King appeared, not in his uſual poſture of *ſitting* at God's right hand, as one poſſeſſed of his royal power; but *ſtanding* there, as if he was miniſtring in the Heavenly Sanctuary, in the quality of a royal high-Prieſt (for that was the poſture of thoſe that miniſtred in the Temple, cxxxiv. *Pſal.* 1.) for the comfort of all Chriſtian people, and of himſelf eſpecially: or rather as ready to come to take vengeance of thoſe implacable enemies, who had killed him and now perſecuted his ſervants; which was a notable inſtance of his royal power at God's right hand. For there the *Pſalmiſt* ſays he muſt reign, till he hath ſubdued all thoſe that oppoſe his authority, and troden them under his feet.

And, as for the *ſecond* enquiry, how he could know this to be *Jeſus*, whom he ſaw in this Heavenly Majeſty? It is eaſily reſolved, that He appeared to him with ſuch a countenance as he had here upon

Earth; only more ſhining and bright, as being now in the glory of the Father. And ſo he tells the *Jews*, I ſee *the Son of Man* ſtanding at the right hand of God. That very perſon, he means, who uſed to call himſelf the *Son of man*, whom you crucified and diſhonourably treated, I now ſee ſo exalted, that I had rather die as he did, than not confeſs him to be the *Son of God*, as he ſaid he was when he died.

This is the firſt teſtimony which was given to this truth by the WORD. Who bore witneſs in a moſt illuſtrious manner to himſelf, when he appeared thus (to a perſon of the greateſt credit) in the *Divine glory*, and in the *higheſt place* of Celeſtial dignity; (as the *King of Heaven*, that is) and *riſen up from his Throne*; as if he was coming to be *avenged* of his adverſaries, to *ſuccour* all his ſervants, and to *welcome* this Martyr into glory with himſelf. So S. *Steven* verily thought, for he reſigns up his Soul to *Jeſus*, with the ſame confidence and almoſt in the ſame words, that *Jeſus* gave up his to God the Father. The laſt words of our Saviour were, *Father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*, xxiii. *Luke* 46. And they ſtoned *Steven*, calling upon God, and ſaying,

Lord

Lord Jesus receive my spirit, vii. *Acts* 59. He died with these and the following devout words in his mouth, crying again with a loud voice, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* In which he expressed as much *charity* to men, as in the other he did *faith* in Christ. And openly declared himself a person of such piety and goodness, such admirable candor and sweetness of spirit, so utterly void of all rancor and gall, when he had the highest provocations from his bitter enemies: that as we may be sure he could not be guilty of devising a lye to the deceiving of others; so we may reasonably believe that God Almighty would not let such an excellent man be deceived, to the ruine of himself, and the casting away so precious a life.

II.

But that jealousie and suspicion might have no pretence left, nor any man justly call in question the truth of this apparition; our Saviour was pleased a second time both to show himself, and also to speak very audibly, unto another person of great integrity and authority; and that was S. *Paul.* Whose testimony concerning this, is the more considerable, because he

was a perſon of conſiderable note in the Nation of the *Jews*, both for his deſcent and for his education, and for his zeal in their Religion. He was an *Hebrew* both by his Fathers ſide and his Mothers; a Scholar of *Gamaliel*'s, under whom he made an exceeding great proficiency; and was addicted to the moſt ſtrict Sect of Religion then among them; whereby he became full of flaming zeal for the Law, of which he was a rigid obſerver, even according to the expoſitions they had made of it by the traditions of their Elders. Theſe he held ſo ſacred, that the name of *Jeſus* was odious to him, becauſe he little regarded them. And he was tranſported with ſo bloudy a rage againſt his diſciples, that his intention was to ſend as many of them as he could meet withall after S. *Steven, to whoſe death he was conſenting*, viii. *Acts* 1. xxii. 20. that is, He approved the fact of thoſe ſeditious Zealots, who were the authors of it; or, as the words may well be rendred out of the *Syriack* tranſlation, he was as well pleaſed with the killing of him as any of the company. The lenity of his Maſter was no example for him to follow. He learnt no meekneſs in the School of *Gamaliel*, but ſuffered himſelf to be hurried away with the furious

iii. Phil. 5. I. Gal. 14. xxvi. Acts 5.

ſpirit

ſpirit of the multitude, whom he accompanied in that tumult. For he undertook to ſecure the garments of thoſe, who ſtript themſelves to throw the firſt ſtone at that bleſſed Martyr of Chriſt *Jeſus*. Nor did his fury reſt here, but he gave his voice againſt other Saints when the ſentence of death paſſed on them, xxvi. *Acts* 10. And not content to make havock of the poor Church at *Jeruſalem*, he enlarged his cruel projects and ſtretches his wrath as far as *Damaſcus*; thither he goes armed with authority from the Senate (xxii. 5.) whoſe Commiſſioner he was now, as he had been for ſome time: which ſhows he was a perſon of no ſmall condition in that Nation. For He tells us himſelf, that what he did at *Jeruſalem* was *by authority from the chief Prieſts*, xxvi. 10. who gave him *letters* alſo to thoſe at *Damaſcus*, that they ſhould aſſiſt him in the apprehending all the Chriſtians that were there, ix. 2. xxii. 5. He brought the Decree of the Senate along with him, which had been made againſt them; and leſt any ſhould queſtion whether he was deputed to ſee that order put in execution, he was ready to ſatisfie them of that by ſhowing his Commiſſion, xxvi. 12. In ſhort, he breathed forth nothing but fire and ſword,

as

as we ſpeak, againſt the worſhippers of the Lord *Jeſus*, being exceeding mad againſt them: according to the account S. *Luke* gives of him, viii. *Acts* 3. ix. 1. and which he gives of himſelf, xxii. 4. xxvi. 11.

Now who would expect that ſuch a man as this ſhould himſelf become a Diſciple of *Jeſus*, much leſs a preacher of his Religion? A man ſo noted for his violence the other way, and whoſe name was ſo terrible to Chriſtian people, that *Ananias* was afraid to go and deliver a meſſage to him from our Lord, after he was told ſomething of his converſion? Was there any hopes that he ſhould ever confeſs and publiſh the very ſame thing for which S. *Steven* was ſtoned? And yet ſo powerful were the prayers of that holy Martyr (which adds much to the force of his teſtimony) that our Lord anſwered them ere long, by pardoning and converting this enraged Zealot. To whom he was graciouſly pleaſed to appear, as he had done to that Saint, more than once, as we find recorded in the Sacred ſtory from his own mouth.

The *firſt* time, and the moſt remarkable was,

was, when he was upon the rode to *Damascus.* Then our Lord met him, not far from that City (when he had no such thing in his thoughts, but was possessed with quite contrary designs) and made him fall down and worship him, whose Name he so hated, that he would have forced all Christians to blaspheme him. Read the ix. *Acts* 3, &c. and there you will find him, who little regarded what S. *Steven* said, and perhaps took him for a frantick fellow when he told them he saw *Jesus* glorified; surrounded himself with such a glorious light from Heaven, as left him no power to resist this truth, which he had so bitterly persecuted. For in that wonderful brightness, there was a person appeared to him with such a dazling lustre, that after he had beheld it, he lost his eyes, *and could not see by reason of the glory of that light,* xxii. 11. which was the cause I believe that he askt with no small astonishment, *Who art thou Lord?* The Angels appeared sometimes in great glory, but never with such a splendour as to hurt the sight, much less to take it away; and therefore he now concluded that this person was of an higher condition, much greater than the Angelical Ministers, whose brightness was never known to be so

ſo amazing. And to give ſatisfaction to his doubt, our Lord, the WORD of God, told him in plain terms, with an audible voice, *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt.* And wiſht him not to proceed any further in this courſe, which he might eaſily ſee would prove deſtructive to him. For to contend with him ſtill who was ſo glorious, what would it be but to wound and ruine himſelf; and by ſeeking to eaſe himſelf of one trouble to run upon a greater; juſt as a beaſt does, that kicks againſt the pricks, which are to quicken it and put it forward? This voice he alone heard, who was to be inſtructed by it. The company that was with him, heard only a confuſed ſound (ix. 7.) and his voice perhaps when he askt that queſtion; but as they ſaw no body, ſo they *did not hear the voice of him that ſpake to him,* xxii. 9. But the light they all ſaw, and were ſo afraid that there they ſtopt their journey, and could not, for the preſent, ſtir a foot from that place. For that's the meaning of *they ſtood ſpeechleſs,* ix. 7. They did not ſtand on their feet, for they all fell to the ground (as you read, xxvi. 14.) but they remained fixt in that ſpot, and could neither ſpeak a word nor go on a ſtep further. As for *Saul* himſelf, he *trembled*

and

and was aſtoniſhed; and began to yield himſelf preſently as a Captive to this Heavenly King, ſaying, *Lord, what wouldeſt thou have me to do?* To this our Lord made him again a diſtinct anſwer (which ſhows this was no ſudden fancy, but that they continued for ſome time in a conference together) and bade him get up, and go into the City, and there he ſhould be directed by him what to do. Accordingly our Lord appeared in a Viſion to *Ananias*, who had the charge, it is likely, of the Church at *Damaſcus*, and ordered him to go in his name, and to lay his hands upon him for the reſtoring of his ſight (ix. 17.) after which he told him, that he muſt now go and tell all men *what he had ſeen and what he had heard* (xxii. 15.) that is, declare to all the world, that *Jeſus* was the King of glory. And which is ſtill more wonderful, *Saul* himſelf as he lay there praying to the Lord for mercy, had the like Viſion (ix. 12.) wherein he ſaw a man of this name coming in to do him this kindneſs. Who no ſooner had executed his commiſſion and put his hands upon him, but immediately the power of our Lord appeared, after he himſelf in perſon was gone. His eyes were preſently opened, though they were ſealed up ſo faſt, as if a cruſt had grown over them.

And

And wonderful was the illumination of his underſtanding, together with the reſtoring of his ſight. The light which had put out his eyes, made him clearly ſee, though he was not told ſo in expreſs words, that *Jeſus was the Son of God.* This Heavenly WORD, you may obſerve, doth not in all this ſtory call himſelf by that name. But he declaring himſelf to be *Jeſus*, and *Saul* ſeeing this *Jeſus* in ſo bright a glory that it exceeded the light of the Sun at mid-day (as he confeſſes to *Agrippa*, xxvi. 13.) it did more than tell him that he was, as S. *Steven* had preached, *the Son of God, the King of glory.* For He appeared to him in his glory, and then told him that he whom he beheld thus exceeding glorious, was that very *Jeſus*, whom he was purſuing as a Blaſphemer, for affirming himſelf to be that which he now ſaw him with his own eyes to be.

What could be more convincing than this? eſpecially when he felt himſelf filled with the holy Ghoſt (ix. 17.) merely by the laying on of the hands of one of *Jeſus* his Diſciples? He durſt not diſtruſt, much leſs reſiſt ſo clear and evident a demonſtration. He ſaw there was nothing truer, than

than that *Jeſus* was the *Son of God.* All his learning could not furniſh him with an argument to confute or weaken this ſingle proof which our Saviour gave him of his Divinity. But *ſtraight-way*, upon this teſtimony from the WORD of God himſelf, without requiring any further demonſtration, *He preached Chriſt in the Synagogues, that he is the Son of God*, ix. 20. *Ananias* did not Catechiſe him in this Doctrine, nor ſent him to the Apoſtles to be inſtructed; but He was made an Apoſtle as well as they, *by Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf (i. *Gal.* 1.) who acquainted him immediately with his will, for he *was not taught it, but by the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt* (*ver.* 12.) whom he preached, without asking counſel of any body (*ver.* 16.) as ſoon as God was pleaſed *to reveal his Son in him.* I believe you will eaſily grant that he was as hard as any man living to be perſwaded to receive this revelation, which would force him not only to contradict all that he had formerly maintained, but to condemn himſelf as the vileſt wretch in the world. To become a diſciple to this faith, and to aſſert it likewiſe ſo earneſtly as he did; what was it but to condemn, together with himſelf, all his Maſters, the grave Judges of the Nation, from whom he had received

received a commiſſion to deſtroy it? It required great courage as well as honeſty to confeſs a Truth, which he knew, by himſelf, would be ſo furiouſly oppoſed. He had been ſuch a fiery perſecutor of all thoſe who believed it, that he had taught his Country-men how to deal with him, if he ſhould now become a proſelyte to it. He was a man alſo of very great parts and learning; and therefore was not like to be moved by a trivial argument. And a perſon likewiſe of as great integrity, who did not bear a malice againſt Chriſtians, but was only zealous for the Law; and therefore would not embrace a new Religion, unleſs he had learnt better reaſons for it, than thoſe which ſupported him in the old. Much leſs would he have ſuffered himſelf haſtily to be carried out of his way, unleſs he had met with ſome irreſiſtible arguments, which were able inſtantly to turn him about, and incline him to the profeſſion of that truth, which he was then perſecuting with an outragious violence.

And yet ſo it was, that this man ſo reſolved in another courſe, ſo certainly undone if he forſook it, of ſuch underſtanding and uprightneſs, was in a trice aſtoniſhed, and

and reduced to ſuch a condition, that he could neither eat nor drink; and in three days ſpace ſo wrought upon, that *ſtraightway*, as you have heard, without any further deliberation or taking more time to ſtudy the point, He not only believed, but undertook to prove, that this perſon whom he had ſo zealouſly oppoſed, was indeed the *Son of God*. Muſt it not be ſome mighty Argument, that could overcome all thoſe reaſons and intereſts too which had engaged him in the contrary belief? Was it not a very clear demonſtration, which could open ſuch a mans eyes in a moment, and break through ſuch ſtrong oppoſition, as lay before his mind to bar its entrance? And yet it was nothing elſe but this teſtimony which the WORD bare to himſelf, that effected this wonderful change. Nothing but *Jeſus* appearing in glory, giving him a terrible rebuke, and ſtriking him blind; which wrought ſuch a ſtrange cure upon him, that as he himſelf ſpeaks (i. *Gal.*23.) He became *a preacher of that faith, which once he deſtroyed*. And therefore this Witneſs cannot but be very powerful to convince every body elſe, which prevailed over a perſon ſo prejudiced and pre-engaged in an oppoſite perſwaſion as *Saul* was.

Who took this Teſtimony, which our Lord had given to himſelf, to be ſo ſtrong and unanſwerable, that preſently after this, when he had further conſidered of the buſineſs and was increaſed in ſtrength, He even *confounded the Jews that were at Damaſcus, proving that this is very Chriſt*, ix. *Acts* 22. So mightily did he convince them, that they had no Anſwer wherewith to encounter his Arguments, but only the Sword: and therefore conſulted (*ver.* 23.) to kill him, and take him out of the way; who as long as he lived they ſaw would be the greateſt witneſs unto *Jeſus*. But all theſe dangers he undervalued, he ran innumerable hazards, made ſtrange adventures, and indured matchleſs troubles; that he might give teſtimony to *Jeſus*, who had ſhown himſelf to him to be the Lord of all. Nay, though he was told at his firſt ſetting out, *how great things he muſt ſuffer for his Names ſake*, ix. 16. he was nothing at all diſmayed, nor in the leaſt diſcouraged: having ſeen the bright Majeſty of *Jeſus* ſo clearly, that flames themſelves could not make him deny it, no nor ceaſe to preach it.

So great was the force of this glorious appearance of our Lord to him, whereby he

he teſtified his own power and greatneſs; that when S. *Paul* was actually fallen into the hands of his bloudy enemies, and made a priſoner, in order to his execution; He had nothing of greater note to alledge for himſelf, by which to juſtifie his preaching *Jeſus* to be the Son of God, than this; that he *had ſeen that Juſt one, and heard the voice of his mouth*; for no other end but this, *That he ſhould be his witneſs unto all men, of what he had ſeen and heard*, xxii. *Acts* 14, 15. And as this was the beſt plea he had when he was to make his defence in that popular tumult, ſo it was the thing that convinced the Apoſtles themſelves that he was become a diſciple. For they doubted of it at firſt, when he came to *Jeruſalem*, and were afraid to aſſociate themſelves with him, till *Barnabas* told them *how he had ſeen the Lord in the way, and that he had ſpoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damaſcus, in the name of Jeſus*, ix. 27. When he came alſo to anſwer for himſelf before *Agrippa*, a Prince of great underſtanding and well verſed in the *Jewiſh* Religion, ſtill he ſtands upon this; that He who thought himſelf bound in conſcience to do many things contrary to the name of *Jeſus of Nazareth*, whoſe ſervants he procured to be

impriſoned, baniſhed, and put to death, was met by this very *Jeſus* in the way to *Damaſcus* (when he was going with Commiſſion to do the ſame there that he had done at *Jeruſalem*) ſaw his exceeding great and incomparable glory; was ſeverely rebuked by him for his rage againſt his diſciples, and then received a Commiſſion from him to act in his name, and to preach againſt the former; all which was ſo evident, that he durſt not be diſobedient to the Heavenly Viſion, but had ever ſince called upon both *Jews* and *Gentiles* to repent and believe in *Jeſus*, though he had been crucified: for it was the Mind of all the Prophets and *Moſes*, that their *Chriſt ſhould ſuffer and then be the firſt that ſhould riſe from the dead, and ſhew light to the people and to the Gentiles.* This is the ſubſtance of his Apology in the xxvi. *Acts*, from which place we may learn *two* things, which are very conſiderable. *Firſt*, that when our Lord appeared to S. *Paul*, he had a great deal of diſcourſe with him, and did not ſay ſo little as only thoſe words, *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt*, &c. but added thoſe words which follow, *ver.* 16, 17, 18. *Riſe, and ſtand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpoſe, to make thee a Miniſter and*

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a Witneſs both of theſe things which thou haſt ſeen, and of thoſe in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and the Gentiles, unto whom now I ſend thee, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified by faith that is in me. The Divine writers are wont to be very brief in their Relations, and to mention only the principal things which were ſaid and done, leaving out the reſt, which perhaps they ſet down upon ſome other occaſion. And *ſecondly*, in theſe words it is obſervable, that he tells him he muſt be a witneſs not only of the *things which he had ſeen* (now in the way to *Damaſcus*) but of thoſe *in which he intended to appear unto him.* Which clearly intimates that there were other apparitions of the Lord *Jeſus* unto him beſides this. Some of them we find recorded in this Hiſtory of the *Acts*, and other parts of the holy Book.

And a *ſecond* ſight which he had of our Lord was at *Jeruſalem*, as he was praying in the Temple. When he fell into an ecſtaſie or rapture, as he relates himſelf preſently after the mention of the former

(xxii. *Acts* 17.) and *ſaw him*; bidding him make haſte away from that City, where he was not like to do any good, *for they would not receive his teſtimony concerning him.* This was one of the times, as ſome great men have thought, when he was carried up to Heaven, 2 *Cor.* xii. 2.

And again our Lord appeared to him the night after he had been queſtioned by the Council, bidding him be of good chear, for he ſhould bear witneſs of him at *Rome*, as he had done at *Jeruſalem*, xxiii. 11. And to omit that apparition to him in a night Viſion, xviii. 9. and the revelations which it is like were made to him in *Arabia*, preſently after his converſion, He was caught up again into *Paradiſe*, and there had ὀπτασίας Κυρίου, *Viſions*, as well as Revelations, *of the Lord*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 1. When this was it is uncertain. But there are perſons of great note, who imagine, that when the Church of *Antioch* laid hands on him (xiii. *Acts* 3.) not to ordain him an Apoſtle, for ſo he was made by *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, but to ſend him out to exerciſe his Apoſtleſhip towards the *Gentiles*, to which he had particularly appointed him; then our Lord vouchſafed to lift him up into Heaven, and to give him new

new Revelations. For there could be no time more fit for it than this, when he was to engage in a dangerous war againſt the whole Idolatrous world. Then he was armed with an extraordinary reſolution, by converſation with Angels in the other world. Where he heard things unutterable, and was confirmed, no doubt, in the belief of the glory of the Lord *Jeſus*, by whoſe power he was thus tranſported; and whom, it is moſt likely, he then again ſaw, ſhining as the Sun among thoſe ſtars of light, in that Orb to which he was carried. But this he ſpeaks of ſo ſparingly himſelf, that I ought to paſs it over as faſt as he does.

The *Firſt* is the chiefeſt and greateſt evidence of all: which he moſt depended on, and whereby he juſtified himſelf againſt all accuſers. This was his warrant; to this he appeals upon all occaſions, that *He ſaw Jeſus in the way to Damaſcus.* And he had great reaſon to ſtick to it; for he knew that no body could ſhame him, by ſo much as pretending that he lied, and that there was no ſuch thing as this apparition of *Jeſus* to him. He had his companions in his journey to be witneſſes of the Miraculous glory, which on a ſudden

ſurpriſed them, as well as him, (xxvi. *Acts* 15.) They heard then the voice of ſome body diſcourſing with him, though they did not diſtinctly hear the words. It became preſently notorious every where; *for this thing*, as he tells *Agrippa*, *ver.* 26. *was not done in a corner*, but openly, and at noon-day, to the aſtoniſhment of divers perſons who attended him. And it left a ſenſible effect upon his body, and upon his mind. He could neither ſee, nor eat, nor drink for three days. In which ſpace he ſaw a viſion of a man named *Ananias* coming to him and bidding him receive his ſight. All which proved true; and together with his ſight he received a new ſpirit, whereby he confounded the *Jews* at *Damaſcus*. For they could not deny all this, and yet were loth to believe in *Jeſus*. They were amazed to hear him preached by a man, who they knew was come thither with a quite contrary intent, ix. 21. They could not but ask, what is the matter? whence comes this marvellous change? *Is not this he that deſtroyed them which called on this Name in Jeruſalem? And is not that the buſineſs for which he came hither, to bring them bound unto the chief Prieſts?* What ailes him now, that he thus juſtifies them and condemns himſelf?

ſelf? And there is no doubt, but to anſwer ſuch Queſtions he took the opportunity to tell them, *what he had ſeen and what he had heard*; for ſo *Ananias* charged him, xxii. 15. He did not keep this as a ſecret; it was not carried in privacy, but preſently divulged, that all might inquire, if they pleaſed, into the circumſtances of the fact. Which was ſo ſtrange, that as it amazed and confounded them at *Damaſcus*; ſo King *Agrippa'* knew not what to ſay to it, but was *almoſt perſwaded to be a Chriſtian*, xxvi. *Acts* 28.

No man of ſence could think that a perſon of his education and learning would venture the loſs of his eaſe, of his reputation, of all the preferment he had, and of all that he might juſtly hope for from the *Sanhedrim*, without the leaſt expectation of any gain, unleſs of that only which *Jeſus* could give him; if he had not been fully aſſured it was no deluſion, when he preſented himſelf to him as the Lord of glory. Much leſs could any man imagine, that a perſon of his vertue and unblameable life under the Law, and of ſuch ſtrange piety and perfect contempt of all worldly things after his receiving Chriſtianity, would feign and deviſe ſuch a ſtory; by which if it

it were falſe he could get nothing in the other world, and if it were true he could get nothing in this. Nothing but miſery, trouble, infamy and reproach, which attended him every where, and never left him till it had brought him to a ſhameful death. If you will but conſider what he quitted for Chriſt's ſake, after he had thus appeared to him, and how the world treated him when he became a preacher of this Goſpel (as you find it deſcribed by himſelf in ſeveral Epiſtles, particularly iii. *Philip.* 8. 1 *Cor.* iv. 9, 10, 11, *&c.* 2 *Cor.* vi. 4, 5, *&c.* xi. 23, 24, *&c.*) you will ſoon be ſatisfied that he was more in his wits, than either to invent this ſtory, or publiſh it without ſtrong aſſurance of its truth. He was as ſure that he *ſaw the Lord Jeſus in his glory*, and *heard the voice of his mouth*, as every body elſe that knew him was ſure, he had been a blaſphemer of him and a perſecutor of his ſervants. And therefore whatſoever it coſt him, he would be obedient to that Heavenly Viſion. And *having a Miniſtry* from him (as he ſpeaks in the 2 *Cor.* iv. 1, 2, 3.) *according as he had received mercy* (ſo he accounted it, a very great favour to become one of his Miniſters) *he did not faint*, nor diſcharge his office ſluggiſhly. Nor did he think of

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making up his loſſes by this new profeſſion of preaching the Goſpel, but abhorred ſuch a diſhoneſt thought, and utterly *renounced all ſuch baſe and ſhameful arts*, though never ſo *ſecretly* managed, and covered over with never ſuch ſpecious pretences. He did not *walk in craftineſs*, nor appear other than he really was. Much leſs would he to pleaſe any men, *handle the word of God deceitfully*; either by concealing any thing that was true, or by mixing any falſe ſtories of his own inventing. No, by *plain truth he commended himſelf to every mans conſcience, as in the preſence of that God*, who is the avenger of all fraud and impoſture. And therefore he juſtly concludes, that if any man did not receive theſe things, nor think them evident enough, it was becauſe he deſerved to periſh, for the love he bore to ſome naughty affection or other, which would not let him ſubmit to *Jeſus*. For it was *him* the Apoſtles preached (*ver.* 5.) not *themſelves*; they did not do their own buſineſs, but his only, whom they proclaimed to be the *Lord*, and themſelves no more but his *ſervants*; nay, the ſervants of all Chriſtian people for his ſake.

But I muſt no longer follow the ſtory of this

this great man, who became *ſo ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might*, after He had from Heaven appeared and ſpoken to him; that as nothing could daunt him, ſo nothing could hinder the ſucceſs of his labours. He became the moſt eminent ſervant of the Lord *Jeſus*, and prevailed ſo mightily againſt all the oppoſition which the Devil or men raiſed to fruſtrate his endeavours, that he gives thanks to God, in the *ſecond* Chapter of that Epiſtle, *ver.* 14. *Who always cauſed him to triumph in Chriſt, and made manifeſt the odour of his knowledge by him in every place.* All his travels and long journeys proved in the iſſue, as if they had been but the carrying of him about in a triumphal Chariot, to make him a glorious ſpectacle in all thoſe places (as the *Syriack* tranſlates it) where, in ſpite of all that the moſt powerful cruelty and rage could do, he was ſtill victorious; and brought divers Souls into a chearful ſubjection to his Maſter Chriſt *Jeſus*.

III.

Who was pleaſed laſt of all, but more frequently than to any other, to ſhow himſelf, after he went to Heaven, to this very

ry Apoſtle, whoſe words I am expounding, his beloved Diſciple S. *John*. By whom he comforts and encourages all other Chriſtians to continue ſtedfaſt in their Religion, and to take their ſhare with him, *in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt*. Who many ways declared to him that he was the *Son of God*, the King of glory, able to reward his patient ſervants: and moreover ſent Letters by him to ſeveral Churches of the Saints; teſtifying the very ſame things, which He made him ſee and hear, in ſeveral viſions. They are recorded in that Book which tells us in the very firſt words of it, that it is the *Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*, which he ſent and ſignified by the Miniſtery of his Angel to his ſervant *John*. Who *had* already *born record* (ſo the word ἐμαρτύρησε is to be rendred *ver.* 2.) *of the WORD of God, and of the teſtimony of Jeſus, and of all things that he ſaw*; Had declared, that is, in his Goſpel *Jeſus* to be the WORD of God; and made known that which he teſtified to be Gods will concerning men; together with all the evidences, by Miracles and other ways, which he had ſeen of the truth of that, which *Jeſus* teſtified. There could not be a fitter perſon than he, who perhaps alſo

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was the only Apoſtle now remaining in the world, to hold communication with this WORD of God, and receive new revelations from *Jeſus*. He being at this time likewiſe baniſhed and confined to *the Iſle which is called Patmos, ver.* 9. for the cauſe now named, that is, *for the Word of God, and for the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt.*

In this loneſome place, ſeparated from the reſt of the Earth, our Lord opened Heaven to him, and ſhewed him the glory which he had there. For he fell into a rapture on the *Lords day* (*ver.* 10.) and heard one ſpeak behind him with a voice as loud as a trumpet, ſaying, *I am before and after all things*, that is, God bleſſed for ever; *Write what thou ſeeſt in a Book, and ſend it to the ſeven Churches which are in Aſia*, whoſe names are there expreſſed, *ver.* 11. Whereupon he turn'd about to ſee whence this voice came, and then he beheld in the midſt of *ſeven golden Candleſticks*, repreſenting thoſe Churches, a very glorious perſon, appearing in the moſt royal majeſty and power. He did not ask him, as S. *Paul* did, who he was; for he had been long acquainted heretofore with that countenance, and knew him perfectly well to be our bleſſed Saviour. Who, by his

his very habit wherein he appeared, declared himſelf to be, as he had ſaid, the Lord of all; who had no ſuperiour, not any ſecond, in that Kingdom which God the Father had given him, but diſpoſed all things according to the ſole pleaſure of his will. For he beheld him, *clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle*, &c. *ver.* 13, 14, 15, 16. He ſaw, that is, as *Irenæus* truly expreſſes it, *Sacerdotalem & glorioſum regni ejus adventum*, him appear in his Prieſtly and glorious Kingdom. For a long Robe and a golden Girdle, belonged both to Kings, and to the High-Prieſt in the *Jewiſh* Nation. And all the reſt of the deſcription, it were eaſie to ſhow, is a plain repreſentation of a perſon ſhining in the glory of God the Father; and inveſted with ſuch an irreſiſtible power in the Heavens, as might juſty make all his Friends rejoyce, who acknowledged him to be the *Son of God* moſt high, and all his Enemies quake and tremble, who oppoſed his ſovereign Authority. In ſhort, ſo glorious was the ſight, that S. *John* himſelf was not able to bear it, but when he ſaw him, fell at his feet as dead, *ver.* 17. till the WORD (as *Irenæus* ſpeaks in the ſame place) on whoſe breaſt he had repoſed himſelf

L. 4. cap. 37.

himſelf at his laſt Supper, revived and comforted him with theſe gracious words; *Fear not, I am the firſt and the laſt: I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore,* Amen; *and have the keys of Hell and of Death.* As much as to "ſay, Thou waſt not deceived when thou "thoughteſt thou ſaw *the Son of man* ap- "pear to thee. It is I indeed, therefore be "not ſo afraid, though now thou behold- "eſt me in ſuch Heavenly Majeſty and Di- "vine glory; for thou oughteſt rather to "rejoyce to think that I am the eternal "God. I whom thou kneweſt when I li- "ved upon Earth, and whom thou ſaweſt "ſhamefully put to death, am now alive, "as thou ſeeſt alſo, never to die any more; "and am intruſted with a power to reſcue "you from death, and raiſe you out of "your graves.

It would be too long, if I ſhould tell you all that he ſays in his Letters to thoſe Churches, to aſſert his title to the Name of the [*Son of God*] which he expreſly takes to himſelf in one of them (ii. *Rev.* 18.) and to declare his royal power which he exerciſes in all the world, eſpecially in his Church, the houſe of the living God; where he hath ſuch an abſolute authority

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(expreſſed by having *the keys of the houſe of David*, &c. iii. 7.) that none can contradict him, either by preſerving any man in the Divine favour, if he reject him; or by excluding any man from it, if he receive him. It may ſuffice to obſerve theſe two things. *Firſt*, that there is not one of thoſe Letters but it begins with ſome ſuch deſcription of our Saviour's ſovereign Majeſty, as this now mentioned. For the character he had given of himſelf in the firſt Chapter, is again repeated, by parts, in the following meſſages to the Churches. Where he ſometimes calls himſelf, *He that walks in the midſt of the ſeven golden candleſticks*, ii. 1. that is, inſpects and governs them. Sometime the *firſt and the laſt, which was dead and is alive*, *ver.* 8. that is, the Lord God, who can raiſe him from the dead, who parts with his life for me. And, to name no more, he calls himſelf, *ver.* 12. *He that hath the ſharp ſword with two edges*, to cut in pieces either them or their enemies, according as they deſerved of him. And indeed it being the office of a King (which is the *ſecond* thing to be obſerved) or a ſupreme Governour, to puniſh offenders, and to reward vertuous perſons; he conſtantly aſſumes both theſe powers to himſelf, in every one of theſe

seven Letters: telling them what evil should befall them from his hand, if they did not amend; and what blessings he would bestow upon them, if they did overcome. Which is a plain declaration of his Regal power and authority, which he now hath at the right hand of the Throne of God.

There S. *John* saw him in a second Vision, as *Irenæus* calls it, *v. Rev. 6.* where he appears in such power with God, that none hath the like. For there was a majesty represented to the Apostle, sitting on a Throne, with a Book in *his right hand* (*ver. 1.*) which none could open, or read, or so much as look into. And then behold, this Lamb of God, who had been slain, comes and appears *in the midst of the Throne*; being the *Lyon* of the Tribe of *Judah*, as one of the Elders calls him, *ver. 5.* that royal person whom God promised to send to rule over them. He takes the Book out of the right hand of him that sate on the Throne, *ver. 7.* which signifies that he is next to God the Father of all, at whose right hand he stood, in power and glory. As appears also by his being seated in his Throne (for the thrones of the Eastern Kings, to which these expressions allude,

allude, were wide, like one of our Couches, in which more than one may ſit) and by his having the principal Angels, the *ſeven ſpirits of God* at his command, to imploy where he pleaſed. Who, together with the reſt of the Heavenly hoſt and with the Chriſtian Church, make their acclamations to him (*ver.* 11, 12.) as worthy of the moſt ſupreme power and dignity, which they expreſs in as many Names of praiſe, as there are principal Spirits of God; when they ſay, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive* 1. *power, and* 2. *riches, and* 3. *wiſdom, and* 4. *ſtrength, and* 5. *honour, and* 6. *glory, and* 7. *bleſſing.* And then immediately he hears every Creature joyning him in their Doxology, together with God the Father, ſaying, *ver.* 13. *Bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

But the more fully to repreſent his Divine power, you may obſerve that he appears in another Viſion to him, in the very ſame ſtate and majeſty, wherein God was wont to make himſelf preſent, in the times of old. Then you read that the Lord *made the clouds his chariot, and walkt upon*

the wings of the wind, ciii. *Pſalm* 3. that is, came to them by the miniſtery of Angels, who appeared in bright and ſhining clouds, to do his will with great expedition every where. For ſo it is expounded in the xviii. *Pſalm* 10. where inſtead of *clouds* it is ſaid, *He rode upon a Cherub and did flie, yea, he did flie upon the wings of the wind.* That is, there was a token of his preſence by the majeſtick appearance of Angels, who were ready to be imployed by him, and immediately to execute his commands. For *to ride* upon any thing, as *Maimonides* obſerves *, is, in the Holy Language, to rule, to govern, to have an abſolute power over it, and diſpoſe of it as one pleaſes. And therefore *to ride upon a Cherub*, or to *make the clouds his chariot* (which are the very ſame, becauſe the Angels appeared in glorious clouds) is to ſend thoſe Heavenly Miniſters whither he thinks good, to perform his pleaſure. Whence it is, I ſuppoſe, that the *Pſalmiſt* ſays elſewhere (lxviii. 34.) *his ſtrength is in the clouds*, becauſe he is powerfully preſent by them in all places. For as *Andreas Cæſarienſis* hath truly obſerved, in his Commentaries upon the Revelation, a cloud, in the Sacred writings, is ever a *Miniſter about Divine buſineſſes, and perpetually*

* *More Nevoch. Part. 1. cap. 70.*

'Ανὶ τῆς Θείων πραγμάτων ὑπηρέτης, &c.

mutually imployed in them; because they are above us, and are very swift, as the Angels are in their motions, and are both dark and bright; a fit emblem of the glory of the Divine Majesty which is inscrutable by us.

Now just in such a glorious Majesty and mighty power did S. *John* behold our blessed Saviour, making the clouds, that is, the Angels his chariot, in which he sate as a Lord, to whom they were to do service. So he tells us in xiv. *Rev.* 14. *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sate, like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden Crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.* Where by *cloud*, the forementioned writer understands, ἀγγελικήν τινα δύναμιν, some Angelical power (of which this *white*, that is, bright *cloud*, was a representation) ministring to our Saviour. For S. *John* saw him upon this cloud; and *sitting* there, as if it were the Throne or Royal Chariot of this Prince. Who sate there with a *Crown on his head*, denoting his Royal authority; and that *of Gold*, to show, by what is most precious among us, τὸ ἔνδοξον, the splendour and greatness of his Majesty; and with a *sickle in his hand*, to signifie that he hath

such a power, as to be able to cut down Kingdoms and States, with as much ease as we mow a field of corn. All these *three* last expressions set forth the highest dignity and most royal power; and therefore so doth his *sitting upon a cloud*, or being carried by Angels, as Kings were anciently and still are in the Eastern Countries by their servants. Which kind of speech, and other such like phrases in the holy Language (as *riding upon the wings* of Angels, denoted by the *clouds* and *wind*) signifie the exercise of his Kingly power by their Ministry. Who are ready to fly any whither, to convey his orders, and execute them throughout the world. Where he being present by them, as a King is by his several Ministers in every part of his Dominions, he is said to *sit upon them*, as if whither-soever they go, they carried him. Thus the ancient Books speak of God the Creator and Governour of all; and thus our Saviour teaches S. *John* to speak of him: which is a sign that he is the Son of God, *who sends forth the Angels to minister for them especially, who shall be heirs of salvation.*

And therefore in another Vision, which is all I need mention, xix. *Rev.* 11, 12, &c.

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He saw him again coming out of Heaven, with the Royal ensigns of his victorious power over those who had opposed his authority. For, *behold a white horse*, which was proper for a conqueror, and one sitting upon him, whose name was called the WORD of God. Who was *clothed*, he tells us, *with a vesture dipt in blood*; that is, with a purple garment, such as Kings use to wear; and *his eyes* sparkled, or rather *flamed like fire*, to denote how terrible he was to his Enemies; and *there were on his head many Crowns*, because he had already conquered several Kingdoms and Provinces, and was now going to subdue more: being attended with *all the armies in Heaven*, who waited upon him to minister to him in this war, till, as he was of right, he was actually acknowledged, by humble subjection to him, to be KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

And what greater argument can there be of the power of our Lord, and of the truth of these Visions (whereby the WORD of God, who hath the lineaments of future things in his mind, as *Irenæus* speaks, represented how God would

hereafter diſpoſe of the affairs of the world) than his poſſeſſing himſelf of a Kingdom, and perſwading ſo great a part of mankind to ſubmit to him, though a King inviſible, merely by the preaching of ſuch men as S. *John?* The event hath proved, it was no deluſion when he heard thoſe *great voices* in Heaven ſaying, xi. 15. *The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.* Which was accompliſhed alſo with very great ſpeed, as he ſaw repreſented by an Angel which appeared *flying* in the midſt of Heaven, xiv. 6. *Having the everlaſting Goſpel to preach unto them that dwell on the Earth.* That motion of *flying* ſeems to ſignifie the haſte which the great Miniſters of Chriſt made (who are compared in this book to Angels) to publiſh his Goſpel to the world. Which had mighty ſucceſs, becauſe it came with authority from Heaven, as is repreſented by the Angels flying ἐν μεσουρανήματι, *in the midſt* of the air, between Heaven and Earth, to denote ſomething he had in hand, which was decreed above, and to be done here below. The greateſt powers on Earth indeed ſet themſelves againſt it, and *made war with the Lamb*, xvii. 14. that is, perſecuted Chriſtianity:

triuniy: But he foretells his conquests, even over these Kingdoms who were such furious enemies, as to seek to destroy his Religion. For which he gives only these two reasons; because God had made him *Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*; and because those who followed him were such *choice persons*, that their patient constant perseverance in his service, to which he had called them, helpt to overcome his and their Enemies, and to bring them in subjection to him.

I can think of nothing that can be objected against what hath been said, but two things, which deserve briefly to be considered. One of them concerns this last particular now handled, and the other seems to cross all that hath been delivered in this Chapter. Against what hath now been alledged from the Revelations, it may be objected, that this Book of Visions was doubted of among some of the ancient Christians. To which the Answer is very obvious, That there was a particular reason why this Book did not always go along with the rest into every bodies hands, and by that means, being not so generally known, was afterward questioned; because the making of it as publick

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as the Chriſtian doctrine, might have too much incenſed the power of the Roman Empire, whoſe downfall is here ſo plainly predicted. Yet it was not kept ſo private, but that it is cited very early both as a Divine Book, and as the writing of S. *John* the Apoſtle, by thoſe who deſerve to be believed. *Juſtin Martyr* had that opinion of it, and ſo had *Irenæus*, as I have already ſaid, and *Theophilus Antiochenus*, and *Origen*; eſpecially S. *Cyprian*, who, I have obſerved, produces teſtimonies out of no book of the New Teſtament ſo oft as this. From whence he encourages Chriſtians to follow their Maſter and all that worthy company who had hazarded their lives for him. *It being the peculiar glory*, ſaith he*, *of our time, that where as ancient examples might be numbered, now there is ſuch an exuberant abundance of vertue and faith, that Chriſtian Martyrs cannot.* *So the Revelation witneſſes, I beheld, and lo a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues ſtood before the Throne, and before the Lamb with white robes and palms in their hands*, vii. 9. *And theſe*, he was told, *are they which came out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

* *De Exhort. Martyr.*

Lamb. I shall not produce the words of any of the rest, nor of divers others, who without any manner of doubting pronounce this to be the *Revelation of the* WORD *of God to his servant John.*

But pass to the other thing, which may be alledged to the prejudice of the whole foregoing discourse. For I produce nothing, some may say, but the testimony which one gives of himself, which all confess to be of no validity. This WORD of God himself saith so, as this very Apostle hath recorded, v. *John* 31. *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true.* And yet what is all that S. *Steven* saw, or that he spake to S. *Paul* and S. *John*, but his witness of himself?

I answer in his own words also, which you read in another place of that Gospel, viii. 14. where the *Pharisees* objecting to him his own confession (*ver.* 13.) that a mans testimony to himself is nothing worth; he seems to revoke, but in truth only explains it, by telling them in terms quite contrary, *though I bear record of my self, my record is true.* The former words are not so to be understood, as if what a man says of himself were always false, or not to

be

be regarded when he hath a concurrent testimony from others; no, it may be *true*, though it will perswade no body else to believe it without other evidence. That's all our Saviour means in the *Fifth* Chapter, if he had alone born witness to himself, and there had been no other testimony given him, it had not been *true*, that is, not a valid, unexceptionable testimony, by which he might demand credit from them. So the word *true* is used, viii. *John* 17. in the sence of the Law, which required two or three witnesses for the establishing or setling any thing in question. They had no reason to believe he was Gods Son, but might still have disputed it, if he had been the only person that said so, and could have brought no other to witness for him. And yet notwithstanding He tells them here, that even in this case his testimony of himself is *true*, as truth is opposed to falshood; though it wanted that truth which was necessary to make it a legal testimony. That is, though it could not have passed in Law, nor stopt the mouth of gainsayers, because it was a single testimony, and the Law required more than one; yet it would have had nothing of a lie in it, but his words would have been perfectly *true*,

when

when he affirmed himſelf to be the *Son of God.*

But [illegible] was not his caſe, He alone did not bear witneſs to himſelf, but there were others beſide him, who bare witneſs of him, and ſaid the ſame thing that he did (as he ſhows, v. *John* 32, 33, 36, &c.) and ſaid it, before he aſſumed this name to himſelf. And therefore his teſtimony, which ſingle would have had no ſtrength, being joyned to the other is of great force, and ought to be regarded. He did not deſire to be received merely becauſe he ſaid he was the Son of God (though he ought not to be accounted a liar for ſaying ſo alone) no, he referred them to other proof of that truth. But when they had heard and conſidered them, then there was reaſon they ſhould hear what he affirmed concerning himſelf: and not think the worſe of him, becauſe he ſpake thoſe words, which were no other than the very words of the Father, whereby he bare witneſs to him. So he tells them in the viii. *John* 17, 18. *It is written in your Law, that the teſtimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witneſs of my ſelf, and the Father that ſent me beareth witneſs of me.* That is, you have no reaſon to diſparage my teſtimony

of

of my ſelf, becauſe I do but repeat the very ſame thing which the Father hath ſaid before me. For though alone (as I have confeſſed heretofore) my teſtimony of my ſelf is worth nothing, and cannot challenge belief; yet added unto ſo high a teſtimony as his, it ought to be duly regarded and accepted.

But beſides this, I muſt add another conſideration of great moment. Which is, that the Teſtimony of the WORD concerning himſelf now that he is *in the Heavens* is of great validity, even ſingly conſidered; though it had no ſuch authority alone, when he was *upon the Earth*. For during his ſtay here *on Earth*, it could not appear by his bare ſaying ſo, that he was the *Son of God*, *the King of Iſrael*; becauſe he was in a poor, mean and low condition, altogether unlike a King: And therefore if the *Father* and the *Spirit* had not teſtified ſo much, none could have believed on him. But when he was *in the Heavens*, then what he ſaid of himſelf carried great authority and power with it; becauſe he could not ſay thoſe words to any one, but he muſt appear as a King in glory. There were things as well as words to ſpeak for him. At the ſame time

time that he bare witness of himself, they to whom he spake must needs see the truth of his Testimony, by the royal state and majesty wherein they beheld him.

If the question should be, whether a person be alive; his own appearing in Court would be the best testimony that could be given of it. If whether such a one be a King, his sitting upon his Throne with his Crown on his head, in his royal Palace, and his Ministers round about him, would be the surest evidence that could be desired to put it out of doubt. In this case therefore where the question is, whether *Jesus* be the Son of God or no; there cannot be expected a better resolution of it, than his own witness to himself, by appearing upon the Throne of his Glory. There several persons of unblemished credit beheld him, and had the confidence to venture their lives upon the certain knowledge they had that they were not deceived. From thence he spake to them, and directed them to speak and carry his messages to others, that they might believe on the Name of the Son of God. And let it but be remembred (which I noted at the beginning) that we are now examining those witnesses which speak from

from *Heaven*, and not thoſe which ſpeak on the *Earth*; and then you will ſoon diſcern that theſe teſtimonies of the WORD, though concerning himſelf, ought to be received with great reverence, and to be judged very full and powerful to prove *Jeſus* to be the Son of God. Eſpecially, ſince beſides his own word for it, we have alſo the word of the Father, who ſeveral times called him his Son, and that before he took this honour to himſelf.

A PRAYER.

LET all mankind therefore honour thee, O bleſſed Jeſus, *even as they honour the Father! Be thou adored every where upon Earth, with the ſame reverence and love, wherewith all the Angels in Heaven worſhip thee! whom they and we acknowledge to be the* LORD; *the* WORD of God; *the* Wiſdom of the Father; *the* bright morning Star; *the* Light of the World; *the* Prince of Life; *the* Heir of all things; *the* KING OF KINGS, AND THE LORD OF LORDS; God bleſſed for ever.

Thou

Thou art the King of glory, O Christ. Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. The Beginner and the Finisher of our Faith; the Judge of the World; the Author of Eternal Salvation unto all them that obey thee. O how happy are they that know thee, and stedfastly believe in thee, and sincerely love thee, and heartily obey thee, and have a good hope that thou wilt bless them, and imploy thy power for their promotion to that glory wherein thou reignest! I rejoyce to hear thee say, that thou who wast dead art alive for evermore, *Amen*: and hast the keys of Hell and of Death. *I thank thee for appearing so often, to assure our Souls, that thou sittest at the right hand of God, and hast all power in Heaven and in Earth. Great is the consolation which thou hast given us, by the sight of that Glory, wherein thy first Martyr beheld thee, ready to succour all thy faithful servants. Marvellous was thy work, O Lord, for which all thy Church will for ever praise thee, in calling* S. Paul to be an Apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God. *Adored be thy glorious Majesty, which appeared to him for this purpose, to make him a* Minister and a Witness of what he saw and heard, that he might go and open the eyes of the Gentiles, to turn them from

darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they might receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified by faith that is in thee. *O how full of comfort is that Revelation which thou haſt made of thy ſelf to thy ſervant* John! *Who received the brighteſt diſcoveries of thy glory in Heaven, when he was in the moſt deſolate condition upon Earth! who beheld thy care over thy Church, and thy conqueſts over thine enemies: thy Prieſtly and thy Royal power, to the perpetual joy of thoſe that love thee, and the terror of all thoſe that oppoſe thee.*

O bleſſed Jeſus, *far be it from any of us in the leaſt to contradict thy will: who art ſo highly advanced far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but alſo in that which is to come. May every Chriſtian Soul be ſo ſenſibly affected with the belief of thy Glory, as to proſtrate it ſelf before thee, and ſay with the ſame ſpirit that thy bleſſed Apoſtle* S. Paul *did when thou appeareddſt unto him,* Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? *May that ardent love burn in every one of our breaſts, towards thee and towards one another, which was in thy beloved Diſciple, who bare record of thee, and teſtified to us theſe things! And*

may

may none of us prove ſo falſe and unkind, as to leave our firſt *love; but our* work, and charity, and ſervice, and faith, and patience *may be ever commended by thee,* and the laſt be more than the firſt!

Then ſhall we be able with a chearful countenance to look up unto thee, and to think of thy majeſty and glory with exultation and triumph, and not with terror and amazement of ſpirit. We will joy in thy ſtrength, O Lord, and in thy ſalvation how greatly ſhall we rejoyce! *We will rejoyce even in the midſt of tribulation; and though we walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, we will fear no evil: but ſtedfaſtly looking up unto Heaven, call upon thee, O Lord* Jeſus, *and beſeech* thee to receive our Spirit. *Into thy hands be they recommended both now and ever, with moſt earneſt deſires and hope, that thou wilt* help thy ſervants, whom thou haſt redeemed with thy precious bloud, and make them to be numbred with thy Saints in glory everlaſting. *Amen.*

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the Teſtimony of the HOLY GHOST.

WE have heard the WORD ſpeak enough in his own behalf; and I do not think it needful to hear that *Witneſs* any further. Let us attend now to the Teſtimony of the third perſon in the holy Trinity, and hear what the HOLY GHOST ſaith; who we ſhall find, upon due examination, agrees perfectly in the ſame thing, and declares that *Jeſus is the Son of God.* Witneſs that glorious appearance of the Divine Spirit upon him when he was baptized, and the great gifts and endowments thereof, wherewith ever after that he was filled himſelf and filled others. For here we may note *three* things, as we did in the opening of the teſtimony of the other two *Witneſſes.*

I.

The *first* is that when the Spirit of God *descended* upon him, immediately after his Baptism, and in an illustrious manner *remained* on him (as S. *John* Baptist testifies it did, 1. *John* 32, 33.) then the Holy Ghost bare witness of him, that he was the *Son of God*. In our reflections upon which, we are to consider distinctly first how it *descended*, and then that it *remained* and abode upon him.

And for the better understanding of both these we must know, that when the *Jews* would express any visible appearance of the Majesty and glory of God, they call it the SCHEKINAH, that is, the *Habitation* or *dwelling*; because God showed himself thereby to be extraordinarily present, and that he did, as it were, *dwell* in that place, to afford those, to whom he so manifested himself, his gracious help, comfort, or instruction. This is the name they give even to that Presence of God which was in the most holy place [the Glory of the Lord which appeared upon the Cherubims] because He dwelt there, and took up his rest among

among them, by this token of his presence with them. So He himself had spoken, xxv. *Exod.* 8. *Let them make me a Sanctuary, that I may* DWELL *among them.* That is, *the Glory of the Lord, which* ABODE *upon mount Sinai* (xxiv. 16.) came and took up its residence there in the Sanctuary. From these two places, they gave it the name of *dwelling* or *abode.* "And tell us, that from the day that this "*Schekinah*, as they speak, or Divine "presence dwelling among them, rested "on mount *Sinai* at the giving of the Law; "it never departed from *Israel*, till the "destruction of the house of the first San"ctuary by the King of *Babylon*: after that "the Divinity or this glorious token of the "Divine presence did not dwell among "them. They are the words of R. *Bechai* upon *Gen.* xlv.

But that which had been so long absent, returned now in a far more glorious manner than ever: not to dwell in an house of stone; but in *the Temple of our Saviours body*, as he calls, ii. *John* 21. For when *Jesus* was baptized, *Lo, the Heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a Dove, and lighting upon him*, iii. *Matth.* 16. Every word of

this verſe is very obſervable. For the *opening of the Heavens* in the prophetical writings (as *Grotius* hath obſerved upon xix. *Revel.* 11.) ſtill precedes ſome great Viſion. And that which he with *John* Baptiſt now ſaw, was the *Spirit of God*; that is, ſuch a glorious appearance of the Divine majeſty, as I before mentioned. For the Rabbins often call the *Ruach Hakkodeſh*, or the HOLY GHOST by the name of *Schekinah*, or the Divine preſence, glorioufly appearing among them. So *Elias* expreſly tells us in his *Tiſhi* *, and gives this reaſon for it, *becauſe it reſted or dwelt upon the Prophets*, and was a great token (I may add) of God's preſence with them. Whence it is, that where the *Hebrew* Text (as he goes on) ſaith, *The ſpirit of Jacob revived*, xlv. *Gen.* 27. *R. Solomon* expounds it thus, the *Schekinah*, or the HOLY GHOST reſted on him; which was departed, and, as it were, extinct before, becauſe of the grief and ſorrow wherein he had been drown'd. For the *Holy Ghoſt*, ſay they, reſts not upon the melancholy, but only on thoſe who are of a chearful ſpirit. Thus when *Hannah* ſaid to *Eli*, who fancied ſhe was drunk, *No, my Lord, I am a woman of a ſorrowful ſpirit*; the *Talmud* expounds it in this

* *Vocab.* שכן.

this manner, *Thou art not to govern in this caſe, the Schekinah and the Holy Ghoſt is not upon thee,* as appears *by this, that thou haſt judged me guilty when I am innocent.*

It is all one then in their Language (as I obſerved alſo before, in the concluſion of the ſecond Chapter) to ſay that the *Divine Majeſty*, or that the *Holy Ghoſt* is upon any perſon. And therefore I doubt not but there was a glorious appearance of the Majeſty of God at our Saviours Baptiſm; ſome great unuſual brightneſs, ſignifying the Divine preſence and the Spirit of God coming to dwell in him. It is not indeed mentioned in expreſs words, that there was ſuch a *Schekinah* or Majeſtical appearance of the Glory of the Lord; but it muſt be underſtood to be meant by the Πνεῦμα Θεοῦ, *Spirit of God.* According to the dialect of that Nation, who call the Holy Ghoſt, as I ſaid, by the name of the Divine Majeſty or Preſence; and ſo might call that Majeſty, by the name of the Holy Ghoſt or ſpirit of God. And *Juſtin Martyr* ſaith expreſly, in his diſputation with the *Jew*, that at our Saviours Baptiſm, Πῦρ ἀνήφθη ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ, *A fire was lighted in Jordan.* That is, as I underſtand it, ſuch a Divine glory appeared as there was among

among the ancient *Iſraelites*, which ſaid, I told you, the reſemblance of a very bright fire. Which ſo good a man would not have had the boldneſs to affirm, if it had not been the conſtant tradition which paſſed among them; or rather the conſtant ſence they put upon this place. Juſt as when the Apoſtles were baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, a fiery ſubſtance gathered it ſelf about their heads, in token of a Divine preſence among them; ſo when our Lord himſelf was baptized with water, there was the like but far more glorious appearance: which ſpreading it ſelf from his head round about, made the River out of which he was newly come, look as if it were on a flame, as a ſign that he ſhould baptize, *not with water, but with the holy Ghoſt and with fire.* And ſo *Grotius* hath obſerved, that in the Goſpel of the *Nazarens*, there were theſe words, εὐθὺς περιέλαμψε τὸν τόπον φῶς μέγα, *ſtraight-way a great light ſhone round about the place*: which the *Syrian* Churches alſo acknowledge in their Liturgy. All which make it apparent, that Holy men thus underſtood the deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt*, as I have explained it. And indeed S. *Luke* tells us, iii. 22. that it deſcended, σωματικῷ εἴδει, *in a bodily form or appearance.* There was

ſome

some visible matter broke out of the Heavens, which being the place of light and glory, we can expound to be nothing else but some very splendid body, a bright shining Light, formed by the Spirit of God, which *came down* from above, just *as a Dove* with wings spread is observed to do, and *lighted upon* our Saviours head.

These *three* last phrases are remarkable. For when the Evangelists say it *came down*, they speak in the constant stile of the holy language concerning the appearance of the Majesty of God, xix. *Exod.* 11, 20. Of whom, as *Maimonides* adds, the Scripture speaks in the same manner, when it describes his bestowing any gifts, or vouchsafing any special token of his favour upon men. *For we * being in a low condition in respect of him, who is the most high, not in respect of place, but of his essence, majesty and power; whensoever He is pleased to give wisdom to any one, or to pour down the gift of prophecy upon him, that abode of the spirit of prophecy, or the habitation of the majesty and presence of God in any place is called his* COMING DOWN; *and the taking away of prophecy, or the recession of the Divine majesty, is called his* GOING UP: For which he cites xi. *Numb.* 17. xxxv. *Gen.*

* More Nevoch. Part. 1. Cap. 10.

Gen. 13. In this language the Holy writers of the New Teſtament here ſpeak: who knew very well that the Divine Spirit is every where, and doth not move from place to place; but ſay it *came down*, becauſe there was an outward viſible appearance of a great glory, which indeed deſcended from above, and declared him, on whom ſuch a majeſty dwelt, to be filled with the gifts of wiſdom and prophecie, and all other powers of the *Holy Ghoſt*. And in the ſame manner they expreſs the unexpected communication of Divine gifts to the *Gentiles*, on whom the Holy Ghoſt *fell* or *came down*, as they heard the word, x. *Acts* 45. xi. 15. That is, there was a ſenſible token of the Divine preſence among them, though no viſible majeſty deſcended; for *they heard them ſpeak with tongues and magnifie God*.

But here, there were both all the gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt* beſtowed, and alſo ſuch a viſible glorious Majeſty, as there was at the giving of the Law: which not only came down, but *light upon our Saviour*, as that glory did on the top of mount *Sinai*, xix. *Exod.* 18, 20. This was a thing, as you ſhall hear, which was never known before, that the *glory of the Lord* ſhould come

come and rest upon any person. It could denote him to be no less than the *Holy one of God*: From whom, as from Gods most holy place, he would hereafter communicate all his blessings to men.

And the more fully to express this, it is very observable, that the *glory* which now appeared came down *as a Dove* doth: which is the very manner wherein *R. Solomon* describes the descent of the Divine majesty in former times. *The Throne of God* (saith he, upon those words, i. *Gen.* 2. *The Spirit of God moved*, &c.) *stood in the air, and hovered over the face of the waters, by the Spirit of his mouth who is most blessed, and by his Word, just AS A DOVE stretches her wings over her Nest.* For it is not certain whether this glorious appearance had the form of a Dove, or only descended in the same manner as a Dove doth, when it came upon our Saviour, and encircled his head.

But that there was such a *glorious Majesty* appeared and lighted on him, ought not to seem incredible to any man that believes the Holy Books of the Old Testament; as *Origen* * shows against *Celsus*, who fooliſhly brings in a *Jew* speaking * *Lib.* 1.

against

againſt this apparition. If he had made an *Epicurean*, ſaith He, deride this report, there had been ſome congruity in it: but it is ridiculous to pin ſuch words upon a *Jew*, who believes things altogether as ſtrange, nay, far more wonderful. To paſs by what we read that God ſaid to *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham* and others, what doth he think concerning *Ezekiel*? who ſays that *the Heavens were opened, and he ſaw Viſions of God*, i. 1. and *ver.* 28. That *this was the appearance of the likeneſs of the glory of the Lord*. And the ſame *Iſaiah* reports concerning himſelf, *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a Throne*, &c. vi. 1. Which of theſe are more to be credited; *Ezekiel* who ſays *the Heavens were opened*, &c. and *Iſaiah*, who writes that he *ſaw the Lord*, &c. or *Jeſus*, who ſays that *the Heavens were opened to him, and he ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending like a Dove, and lighting upon him*? This is enough to ſtop the mouth "of any *Jew*, eſpecially ſince the power of "*Jeſus* (as *Origen* proceeds) not only then "when he was on earth far excelled "theirs: but ſtill remains now that he is "in Heaven, for the converſion and bet-"terment of thoſe, who by him believe in "God.

And

And as for others, He tells *Celsus*, that all those who admit Providence, confess that God hath sometimes forewarned men in their sleep, of things which much concerned their safety. And therefore it is no such strange thing, if that power which figures the mind in a dream, should impress the same or the like form upon it, when a man is awake: and represent things as sensibly to him, as if he saw them with his eyes and heard them with his ears. And why that should not be as really seen, if God please, which is represented to a man in his imagination; no body can give any reason.

As for that which *Celsus* objects, that the Gospel never tells us, our Saviour was wont to mention this and appeal to it, in his preaching to the people; He tells him that he did not mind how unseemly it was for our Saviour to divulge himself what was seen and heard at *Jordan*, who forbad his Disciples to publish that which they beheld and heard on the holy Mount. There was a fit time for the open proclaiming of both, by others, not by himself. For the manners of our Saviour were far from that περιαυτολογία, vain ostenta-

tion

tion and much talk of himself, which such a man as *Celsus* might be guilty of. He chose by his works, rather than by his words, to tell them that he was the Christ. Which made the *Jews* say, *How long dost thou hold us in suspence? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly*, x. *John* 24. So he did, but it was by that which was more convincing than his testimony of himself could then be. *I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Fathers name, they bear witness of me*, *ver.* 25. That one work which he had wrought just before, was so miraculous, that the like had not been heard of since the world began, ix. 32. For he had opened the eyes of a man who was born blind; as they themselves could not deny; for the mans Parents testified that he could never see till now; and he affirmed it was *Jesus* who had given him his sight. If they had not been blinder than He, this might have opened their eyes to see who our Saviour was without any further telling. For what could He say of himself more than this Miracle spake: which others reported, not He? It told them loudly enough, would they have heard, that he had the power of God in him; one of whose prerogatives it is (cxlvi. *Psal.* 8.) *to open the*

eyes

eyes of the blind. And *John* Baptiſt alſo had told them plainly, that *he ſaw the Spirit deſcending from Heaven, like a Dove, and it abode upon him,* i. 32. Here was an unexceptionable witneſs of the truth of this ſtory, which *John* preſently publiſhed. And they had reaſon to believe him, becauſe he that authorized him to adminiſter that Baptiſm, which they received, gave him this for a ſign whereby he ſhould know the Chriſt when he ſaw him; *Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending and remaining on him, the ſame is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghoſt. And I ſaw, and bare record, that this is the Son of God,* ver. 33, 34.

He could be no leſs, on whom ſuch a Divine Glory, not only deſcended, but alſo *remained* and took up its abode with him. That's the laſt thing to be conſidered, and the chiefeſt of all. He had not a mere glance of this viſible Majeſty, which did not make a tranſient appearance: but he ſaw it *remaining* on him. It ſtaid for ſome time there, as if it intended to make him its habitation and dwelling place. And ſo it did; for as *He* ſaw the viſible Divine majeſty or glory remaining on him then; ſo the thing ſignified by it continu-

ed alway; and made *all* ſee, if they would attend, that he was the Sanctuary or moſt holy Place, in which God was, and had taken up his reſidence for ever. The body of *Jeſus*, as I ſaid before, is now become the *Temple of God*; not made by man, but by God himſelf in the Virgins womb. There God manifeſted himſelf perpetually by ſenſible effects, as I ſhall ſhow you preſently; declaring *Jeſus* to be his Son, in whom *the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt bodily*.

After this viſible Majeſty diſappeared, the preſence of God within him was very apparent. For he came away from *Jordan*, ſaith S. *Luke*, *full of the Holy Ghoſt*, iv. 1. And having been tempted a while in the wilderneſs, *he returned* from thence, *in the power of the Spirit into Galilee*, *ver.* 14. There he taught in his own City, and opened the Book at that very place of *Iſaiah*, where he ſaid, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*: which Scripture was that day fulfilled in their ears, *ver.* 18, 21. And at *Cana*, in that Country he began to work miracles, and *manifeſted forth his glory*, ii. *John* 11. That is, ſhowed indeed that the Divine Majeſty ſpoken of before, remained in him. Of which glory they did not

not ſee ſo little as a flaſh or two, but *they beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*, i. 14. He caſt about every where ſuch rays of glory and majeſty as declared him to be no leſs perſon than God's *only begotten Son*: and theſe they *beheld*, and were conſtant eye-witneſſes of, to the end of his life. For *he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil; for God was with him*, x. *Acts* 38. This was all his buſineſs, to beſtow benefits upon mankind, and to relieve thoſe who were otherways helpleſs, but only by a Divine power. As was notorious in his frequent diſpoſſeſſion of Devils, and opening the eyes of him who was blind from his birth; and after that, raiſing *Lazarus* from the dead, in which great work *they ſaw the glory of God*, xi. *John* 40. Who *did not give the Spirit by meaſure to him*; that is, with ſuch reſtriction as he himſelf gave it to his Apoſtles at the firſt: *But the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands*, as the Baptiſt ſpeaks, iii. *Joh.* 34, 35. *It pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell*, i. *Coloſſ.* 19. So that none could have any thing of the Spirit, but from his hands, and he could communicate what he pleaſed. Which is a ſign

that he was the place, where the Divine majeſty and the Holy Spirit now dwelt, and had taken up its reſidence among men; who muſt all repair to him, if they would receive the Holy Ghoſt, or any bleſſing from above.

What greater argument could there be, that he was the Son of God, than this, that he had *all things* now *put into his hands*, to do what he pleaſed on *Earth*: and received the *Holy Ghoſt* in ſuch a viſible Majeſty, as a pledge that he ſhould ſhortly have all power in *Heaven* too, at the right hand of God? It was fit that this glorious teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt to him ſhould be accompanied with the voice of God, which came out of that or the like cloud, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* So we ſhall have ſtill farther reaſons to acknowledge him, if we do but make theſe following Reflections upon what hath been here diſcourſed.

One is, that here was not ſo little as the appearance of an Angel to him, by whom God declared his will to the Prophets: but a far more illuſtrious manifeſtation of the Divine Glory, which came down upon

on him and declared him more than a Prophet. *Maimonides* doubts not to ſay * that *all Prophecy was by the mediation of Angels,* xvi. *Gen.* 9. xxii. 15. *Moſes* himſelf began to be a Prophet by this means, iii. *Exod.* 2. *The Angel of the Lord appeared to him, in a flame of fire in the Buſh.* For which cauſe, he thinks, God afterward appointed *two Cherubims* to cover the Ark, that the people might be bred up in the belief of Angels. And God is ſaid *to dwell* between them, and *to ride* upon them; becauſe all Prophecy was carried by them from God to men. But here is ſomething far beyond this way of communication between God and Men. For not an Angel appeared or ſpake unto him: But that Divine Glory which dwelt between the Cherubims, deſcends upon him and makes him its reſting place; and God himſelf ſpeaks to him at the ſame time out of that Glory, calling him his *Son,* and bidding all *hear him.* This was a manifeſt declaration of his high and ſingular prerogative; and a ſign that no leſs than the *fulneſs of the Godhead* dwelt in him: So that he knew, as I ſaid before, the mind of God, not by Viſions and Dreams, or by mediation of Angels, but by a more intimate familiarity with God, dwelling and reſiding in him.

* *More Nevoch. Part.* 3. *cap.* 45.

For you may obſerve further (which is another thing very remarkable) that though there had been formerly an appearance of a *Schekinah*, of the Divine preſence, that is, or glory of God, when the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt were imparted to ſome perſons: Yet we never read that this *Schekinah* came down upon any man, much leſs that it remained on him, but upon *Jeſus* only. When the LXX. Elders were to receive a portion of *Moſes* his Spirit, God ordered them to be brought unto the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and ſays, he would come down and talk with *Moſes there*, and take of the Spirit which was upon him, and put it upon them, xi. *Numb.* 16, 17. Accordingly you read (*ver.* 24.) that as they ſtood round about the Tabernacle, *the Lord came down in a cloud* (*ver.* 25.) that is, in ſuch a manner as now the Holy Ghoſt deſcended at our Lord's Baptiſm: But He came not down upon them, who were about the Tabernacle; but rather (as in the next ſtory, xii. 5. and at other times) *ſtood in the door of the Tabernacle*; from whence he ſpake to *Moſes* and took of the Spirit which was on him, and gave it to the ſeventy Elders. Whereas here the *Holy Ghoſt* came down

in

in a visible glory, and pitched upon *Jesus* himself: who was the Tabernacle now, where God chose to dwell. For this *Schekinah*, as you have heard, or Divine majesty, not only *lighted* on him, but rested there and *remained* in him: as if God had told him who saw it both descend and abide on him; *Here will I dwell for ever, for therein do I delight.* This demonstrated him to be more than any ever was; not merely a great Prophet, but the very Son of God. Never was there such a Crown prepared for any mans head, but his. Never before did the hand of Heaven put such a Diadem of Glory upon any person, as this which encircled, and, as I may say, was bound about our Saviour. This can be accounted nothing less than the testimony of the HOLY GHOST to him; that he was the *Holy one* of God, the *anointed* from above, the *King* of God's people, and *the heir of all things.*

Thus S. *Peter* you know expresses the honour which was now done him, when he tells *Cornelius* and his company, x. *Acts* 38. that *God ANOINTED him with the Holy Ghost, and with power.* The HOLY GHOST came down as an holy oil from the Heavenly Sanctuary,

which being poured on him, in ſuch a glorious Majeſty, gave him authority to be called the *Son of God*, and made him *his King*. So *John* Baptiſt acknowledged him, you remember, as ſoon as he beheld this ſtrange ſight, *and bare record* of it unto others, that *this perſon* (thus anointed) *was the Son of God*, i. *John* 34. He was now inveſted with a royal power (for that's the meaning of his being ANOINTED) and we ought, I ſhall ſhow you, to look upon this as a ſolemn inauguration of him in his Kingdom: to which he had now a title given him, together with ſome part of a Kingly Authority. And if there be any truth in the Traditions of the *Hebrews* concerning their own Ceremonies, there was ſomething remarkable in it that this ANOINTING him with the holy oil from above, was immediately after he came up out of the waters of *Jordan*. For *Maimonides* and the Doctors in the *Talmud* tell us, that they never anointed a King of the houſe of *David*, but at the ſide of a Fountain, or of a River of water. Which was the reaſon that *David* commanded his ſervants, *to bring his ſon Solomon down to GIHON*, 1 *Kings* i. 33. and there anoint him King over *Iſrael*. For this GIHON was a little River, as

R. *Solo-*

R. Solomon there notes, or the head of a River nigh *Jeruſalem*, which diſcharged it ſelf into the brook *Kidron*, and in the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe is called by the newer name of *Siloah*. It was made very famous afterward by that memorable work of *Hezekiah* (*2 Chron.* xxxii. 30.) who to take away the advantage any Enemy might make of it in a ſiege, ſtopt up the courſe of its water, and brought it by Chanels under-ground into the City of *David*. At this place without the walls of *Jeruſalem*, not in the City, *Zadok and Nathan anointed King Solomon*. That is, one of them poured out the oil, and the other anointed his head; drawing a circle with the oil upon it. For ſo they all ſay, that Kings were anointed *in the form of a Crown*, to denote the royal dignity. Which if it be true, and that they made choice of ſuch a place to ſhow (as they will have it) the perpetuity of their Kingdom; becauſe Rivers run alway, though the Cities which ſtand by them decay and may be demoliſhed: then it is very obſervable that our Lord was ANOINTED or Crowned with the Holy Ghoſt by the River JORDAN, rather than in any other place, to denote him indeed to be the King of *Iſrael*, who ſhould *ſit upon the throne of his Father*

Father David, as the Angel ſaid, *for ever and ever.*

But this I mention only by the way. The chief thing to be noted is, that now he began to reign, and entred upon his Kingdom, called the *Kingdom of God*, and the *Kingdom of Heaven*: which *John* Baptiſt told them was at hand. For this deſcent of the HOLY GHOST in ſuch a viſible majeſty did not merely give him a title to the Divine Kingdom which was to be erected by him in the world; and aſſured him that he was God's Chriſt, or ANOINTED, that is, *his King*; and endued him with ſuch royal qualities, as fitted him for that office: But it made him a King by conferring ſeveral branches of the Regal power on him, and by giving him authority to exerciſe them in the world. It is true indeed, he did not actually take poſſeſſion of his Kingdom, nor exerciſe his royal power completely, and the time of his inthroning was deferred, till he had accompliſhed the will of God other ways, and *by the ſuffering of death was crowned with glory and honour* in the Heavens. But that he did not act only as a Prophet all his life-time, but likewiſe took upon him the perſon of a King (or acted

acted as a Royal Prophet) doing many things which only the royal Authority could do, is a moſt manifeſt Truth in the Holy ſtory.

Which cannot be better explained than by the parallel caſe of his Father *David*, who was the exact type and figure of him. He was *anointed* by *Samuel* ſome years before he ſate upon the *throne of the Lord*. But as that *Unction* was the deſignation of him to the royal dignity, and a pawn or pledge of the poſſeſſion of it in due time: ſo ever after he atchieved very great things which ſpoke him to be the perſon deſigned by God for his Kingdom (as it is called, I told you, 2 *Chron.* ix. 8.) and he alſo received ſome portion of it, before he enjoyed it all entirely, 2 *Sam.* ii. 4. 9. v. 3. Juſt thus did our bleſſed Saviour, after he was ANOINTED with the *Holy Ghoſt*, give ſeveral proofs that he was a *King* (which is the meaning, you have heard, of the word CHRIST) and had received ſome of the power belonging to that high office. For *firſt* he caſt out Devils and cured all diſeaſes, at any time, when he pleaſed, only with his powerful word, and for nothing. Which were Acts of ſuch royal bounty, that he had

reaſon

reaſon to ſay, xi. *Luke* 20. *If I by the finger of God caſt out Devils, no doubt the* KINGDOM *of God is come upon you.* And *ſecondly*, over and above this, he forgave mens ſins, and remitted their offences, by releaſing many from the puniſhment of them (v. *Luke* 20.) which every one knows is a power wherewith only Kings and Sovereign Princes are inveſted. And *thirdly*, He raiſed a man from the dead, and releaſed him even from the priſon of the grave. Which certainly was the act of a *King*; and of that King who had *power over all fleſh*. So *Martha* her ſelf underſtood it, when ſhe makes it all one, to raiſe the dead, and to be that King whom God promiſed to ſend them. For when our Saviour ſaith to her, *I am the reſurrection and the life*, &c. *believeſt thou this?* Her anſwer follows in theſe terms, *Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the* CHRIST *the Son of God which ſhould come into the world*, xi. *John* 27. And laſtly, the very preaching the mind of God, and publiſhing the Goſpel of the Kingdom, with ſuch authority as he did, was the part of a King. For ſo he interprets the word *Kingdom*, when he ſtood before *Pilate*, xviii. *John* 37. Where you may learn, that all this is not the mere collection of reaſon, from the

the obſervations we make as we read the Holy ſtory; but that which our Lord himſelf affirms in expreſs words, when he was examined by *Pilate* upon this very point. For our Lord ſeeming to grant that he had a *Kingdom*, though not of this world, but Heavenly, *ver.* 36. the Governour asks him again, *Art thou a* KING *then?* To which he anſwers him roundly, *Thou ſayeſt that I am a* KING, i. e. yes, I am; it is as thou ſayeſt. So the reſt of the Evangeliſts report his Anſwer; *Thou ſayeſt it*, xxvii. *Matth.* 11. xv. *Mark* 2. xxiii. *Luke* 3. which is as much, in their Language, as to ſay, *it is ſo*; thou haſt ſaid right, *I am a King.* This is *that* GOOD CONFESSION *which he witneſſed before Pontius Pilate*, which the Apoſtle propounds to *Timothy*'s imitation, 1 *Tim.* vi. 13. He now openly owned, with the danger of his life, that, as mean as he appeared at preſent, he was appointed by God to be his Vicegerent, the King of the world: which he had manifeſted by ſeveral acts of Kingly power ever ſince he was *anointed with the Holy Ghoſt.*

And he had ſaid the ſame before, when he was brought to anſwer for himſelf in the chief Council of the *Jews.* Where the

the High Prieſt asked him, and ſaid unto him, *Art thou the Chriſt, the Son of the Bleſſed? And Jeſus ſaid, I am,* xiv. *Mark* 61, 62. Which words [*I am*] are the plain interpretation of the other phraſes in the reſt of the Evangeliſts, *Thou haſt ſaid,* xxvi. *Matth.* 64. and, *ye ſay that I am,* xxii. *Luke* 70. where you read, *ver.* 71. that hearing this confeſſion, they forbare to produce any more witneſſes, and condemned him out of his own mouth. That is, they paſſed the ſentence of death upon him, as a counterfeit (ſo they pretended) of that royal Prophet, whom they expected to come into the world. Under this character they delivered him to *Pilate,* hoping that he would likewiſe condemn him for Treaſon againſt *Cæſar*: whoſe authority they would have him believe our Saviour ſubverted, *by ſaying, He himſelf was* CHRIST *a King,* xxiii. *Luke* 2. So the whole multitude of his Diſciples had a little before proclaimed him (though not ſuch a King as would do *Cæſar* any harm) when they met him at the foot of the Mount of Olives, and with great joy praiſed God for all the mighty works they had ſeen, *ſaying, Bleſſed be the* KING *that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in Heaven, and glory in the higheſt;*

higheſt; that is, let Heaven proſper his Kingdom, till it be made moſt glorious, xix. *Luke* 38.

There needs no more be ſaid to ſhew, that he was made a King, by this Unction of the *Holy Ghoſt*; though the full poſſeſſion of his Kingdom and exerciſe of his whole royal power he did not attain, till he was advanced to his Throne of glory in the Heavens; when he received from the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt to beſtow upon others (ii. *Acts* 33.) and poured it down as an holy Oil on their heads, to create them Miniſters in his Kingdom.

That was a further witneſs to our Saviour, as I ſhould now proceed to ſhow you; but that it may be fit, before I part with this, to take notice, that this teſtimony which the HOLY GHOST now gave to him, when it *anointed* him at his Baptiſm, was ſo remarkable, that *Mahomet* hath not forgot to leave a remembrance of it in his *Alcoran*. Where he brings in God ſpeaking after this manner; * *We have already ſent a Book* (i. e. the Law) *to Moſes, and afterward we ſent the Prophets; and to Jeſus the Son of Mary we*

* *Vid. Sold. de Synedr. Lib. 2. C. 4. n. 4.*

we have ſent moſt known (or eminent) *vertues, and we gave him a* TESTIMONY, *and ſtrengthened him with the* HOLY GHOST. In which words, a great Paraphraſt of theirs upon the *Alcoran*, by *known vertues or powers* given to our Saviour, underſtands the gift of working miracles; as opening the eyes of the blind, cleanſing lepers and raiſing the dead. Though by the *Holy Ghoſt*, they generally underſtand no more than the Angel *Gabriel*, who for the manifeſtation of him (as that Paraphraſt ſpeaks) was *ſent a-long with him, as his companion, whitherſoever he went.* Which notion, I imagine, they drew out of the *Jewiſh* writers, who ſay that ſuch glorious apparitions, as that at Chriſt's baptiſm, were made by the miniſtry of Angels, who were the Chariot of God, in which he was ſaid to come down to men.

But whatſoever *Mahomets* meaning was, when he ſays *God ſtrengthened him with the Holy Ghoſt*, it is an open acknowledgment of that which the Divine writers have recorded; which was ſo famous and notorious, that Infidels could not deny it. Nay, ſome of that falſe Prophets followers have ſaid expreſly, that the *Holy*

Holy-Ghoſt is no Creature, but hath a ſingular production proper to it ſelf. For it is not a ſpirit after the manner of other ſpirits, becauſe it is the ſpirit of God. The ſpirit of a Man is a Creature, but the ſpirit of God is not.* It was more than an Angelical preſence then that was in our Saviour: of whoſe birth indeed the Angel *Gabriel* brought the news to his Mother, but he did not pretend that ſhe ſhould conceive by his power; no, he ſayes expreſly, *The HOLY GHOST ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the higheſt ſhall overſhaddow thee.* And therefore at his new-birth, as I may call it, to the office of a King, it was the very ſame power of the higheſt, which in a viſible manner then overſhaddowed him and remained on him; to teſtify that he was as the Angel ſaid, the *Son of God.* To conclude this; the Angelical Salutation to the bleſſed Virgin, is after this manner recited in the *Alcoran*, in the next Chapter to that before named. *O Mary, God ſends thee a good Meſſenger, by his WORD which is out of himſelf. His Name is Meſſias, or Jeſus Chriſt the Son of Mary, powerful in this preſent World, and in the World to come.* Where the forenamed Paraphraſt ſays, he was powerful in the preſent World *by Prophecy*, and in the

* Vid. lib. pag. 127.

World to come, *by Interceſſion, and Celeſtial preparation.* He ſhould have added alſo, what he ſaid before, that he was powerful here by that which is properly called *power*, the healing Diſeaſes, opening blind Mens eyes, and ſuch like works of wonders: the *Divine Majeſty* reſting on him and abiding in him, in ſo glorious a manner, that he might properly be called the *Temple of God.*

For whatſoever demonſtrations there were of Gods preſence in the Tabernacle of *Moſes*, or in the Temple of *Solomon* (which were alike filled with the *glory of the Lord*, xl. *Exod.* 34, 35. 2 *Chron.* v. 13, 14.) the very ſame tokens there were of his preſence in our Saviour. Nay, it is eaſie to ſhow that he manifeſted himſelf, in all his glorious Attributes, more in our Saviours Perſon, than ever he did in either of thoſe places. And it will be ſuch an evident demonſtration of the truth I am aſſerting, and give ſuch light to this teſtimony of the Holy-Ghoſt, who appeared in that excellent *Majeſty* which deſcended on him; that I think it will be worth my pains to make good the Parallel in ſome inſtances.

I. And

I. And first you may observe that from the *holy place* in the Tabernacle, God declared his mind and will; and made known to his People what he would have done. There God told *Moses, he would meet and commune with him, of all things which he would give him in commandment to the Children of Israel,* xxv. Exod. 22. And we are told the manner of it, vii. Num. 89. *When he was gone into the Tabernacle, he heard the voice of one speaking to him from off the Mercy seat, that was upon the Ark, from between the two Cherubims.* From thence God gave out to *Moses* his λόγια (as the Apostle calls them, iii. Rom. 2.) *Oracles*, or such words of direction and command, as were necessary for the good Government and preservation of his People: whose Laws, Statutes and Judgments, came from the *holy Oracle* in the Sanctuary of God. This was a marvellous favour of Heaven to them; though nothing comparable to the manifestation of the wisdome and counsel and will of God by our blessed Saviour. Who not only revealed his Mind more clearly and abundantly; thereby showing he is the Temple of God: but told us such things as never came from the former holy place; things which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither did they en-*

ter into the heart of man to conceive. He was the λόγος, or WORD of GOD, in this ſence as well as any other; becauſe he acquaints us with Gods mind, and declares to all Mankind his ſacred will; and, as from an *holy Oracle*, utters things ſecret from the foundation of the World. For *the Word was made Fleſh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth*, i. Joh. 14. The word *full* relates to λόγος the WORD, in the beginning of the Verſe (the other part of the Verſe being inſerted between in a Parentheſis) and carries this ſence in it, that Jeſus being fully acquainted with all the gracious counſels of God concerning Men, hath declared them to us, and made us alſo acquainted with them. He was ſo *full of truth* that he calls himſelf ἡ ἀλήθεια *the truth* it ſelf, xiv. Joh. 6. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the onely begotten Son, he hath declared him*, i. 18. That is, he hath made God viſible to us: he as an ἐξηγητὴς, *expounder* or *interpreter* of anothers mind, hath opened to us all his ſecrets concerning our Salvation; and thereby declared that he is no leſs than the Wiſdom of God. When he appeared in the World, then *Wiſdome built her ſelf an houſe*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, ix. Prov. 1. Which words * *Athanaſius* not unfitly accommodates

* *Orat. 3. contra Arrian.*

dates to our Lord Chriſt, *Whoſe body is the houſe of Wiſdome.* And a moſt holy houſe, the dwelling place of God; from whence he hath revealed himſelf not to ſo few as one Nation, but to all the World: whom, if they would open their eyes, he hath illuminated with his Wiſdome.

R. *Bechai* I remember will have the *Ark* from whence *Moſes* heard God ſpeaking to him, to be called in their Language by the name of אורן, from אור; as much as to ſay, *becauſe of the light* which was there. Which he will have to be the Law (preſerved in the Ark) which was the Light of *Iſrael.* And juſt thus writes S. *John* concerning this WORD of God, 1. 4. *In him was life, and the life was the light of men. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the World, v.* 9. For ſo Jeſus proclaimed himſelf, ſaying, viii. 12. *I am the* LIGHT *of the World.* And ſuch a *Light* he was, that all the wiſdome which was diſcovered before from the Sanctuary of God; was but Clouds and darkneſs, in compare with that which was made manifeſt by our Saviour. The beſt knowledge they had was covered and wrapt up in types and figures, till God appeared in Jeſus, and rent thoſe clouds in

pieces, by the brightneſs of his beams. They had but ſuch a confuſed apprehenſion of things in former times, that S. *Paul* compares this diſcovery of God in Chriſt, to the breaking forth of light, out of the rude Chaos, in the beginning of the world, 2 Corinth. iv. 6. *For God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs* (i. Gen. 2, 3.) *hath ſhined in our hearts* (the hearts of the Apoſtles) *to give the light of the knowledge of the* GLORY OF GOD, *in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* Some flaſhes of which light and majeſty of God in him, came from his face; not long after he entred into the World. When he was but a Childe, they wondred at his wiſdome; and *were aſtoniſhed at his underſtanding and anſwers,* ii. Luk. 47. But when he was grown up and the *Holy Ghoſt* came down from Heaven upon him, like the Glory of the Lord which filled the Tabernacle and Temple; then his Wiſdome appeared the more illuſtriouſly. And was the more amazing; becauſe they knew he was not trained up in the Schools of Learning, nor had any better breeding than a Carpenter's ſhop could give him. For ſo his Countrymen ſay, in S. *Mark,* vi. 2, 3. *Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Mary? How comes he by theſe things? and what wiſdome is this*

which

which is given unto him? They were *aſtoniſhed* at his Doctrine, and as S. *Luke* tells us, iv. 22. *Wondred at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* For beſides the Divinity of the matter which he ſpake, and the mighty works which accompanied it; there was a certain majeſty in the manner of its delivery. For he taught *as one having authority*, vii. *Matth.* 29. That is, as one who had power to enact and ordain new Laws (and thoſe much ſuperiour to the old) and not only to explain thoſe which were already written. He plainly alſo diſcovered a power to reward the faithful and to puniſh the diſobedient; which was ſo aſtoniſhing, that in the judgment even of thoſe who were ſent to apprehend him, *Never man ſpake like unto him*, vii. *Joh.* 46. He opened to them the Kingdom of Heaven; he revealed to them Immortal Life; he gave them Manna, of which if a Man did eat, he aſſured them he ſhould never dye: and he promiſed (which is the thing they chiefly refer to in that ſpeech) that *Whoſoever believed in him, out of his belly ſhould flow rivers of living water; which he ſpake concerning the ſpirit, which they that believed on him ſhould receive, v.* 38, 39. When this promiſe was fulfilled, then

that which *Moſes* did but wiſh for, was actually done, *All the Lords people became Prophets.* He made the gifts of *Prophecy*, and *wiſdome*, and *knowledge*, as common as ordinary diſcourſe was before. Which ſhowed that indeed God dwelt in him; elſe he could not have had all this wiſdome, much leſs communicated ſo much to others.

II. But it will not be fit to proſecute theſe things too largely; therefore let us paſs to the conſideration of the *mighty power of God* manifeſted from the place where he was ſaid to dwell; which was an evidence that he was there. And this you ſhall ſee appeared no leſs in our Saviour, as a token that God dwelt in him, and that he was become his Temple. All their *help* you know of old is ſaid to come *from the Sanctuary*, where God inhabitated, and he is ſaid *to ſtrengthen them out of Sion*, xx. Pſal. 2. Thence the Ark, upon the Cover of which the Divine Glory ſate, is called *The Ark of his ſtrength*, cxxxii. Pſal. 8. Nay, it is often called ſimply by the name of *his ſtrength*, Pſal. lxix. 61. *He delivered his STRENGTH into captivity, and his Glory into the Enemies hand.* And *Pſal.* cv. 4. *ſeek the Lord and his STRENGTH*; that

that is, the Lord before the Ark of his preſence, from whence their help and ſuccour came. For whether this went, God was ſaid to go along with them to deliver them. As the Philiſtins themſelves had learnt; who hearing the *Iſraelites* had brought the Ark into the Field, began to be afraid and ſaid, *GOD is come into the Camp. Wo be to us: for there hath not been ſuch a thing heretofore*, 1 *Sam.* iv. 7, 8. That is, we fought with Men hitherto, now with God. And this is the meaning of thoſe words, lxxx. Pſal. 2. *Before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manaſſeh, ſtir up thy STRENGTH, and come and ſave us.* Thoſe three Tribes marching immediately after the Ark (for their quarter was on the *Weſt* of the Tabernacle, in which part was the moſt holy place, and the Ark in it, ii. Numb. 17, 18, &c.) it is as much as if he had ſaid, make thy ſelf ſenſibly preſent now to thy People; manifeſt thy favour towards them from thy Mercy ſeat; ſhew that thou art among us, and give us a ſign and token of thy preſence and power, by overcoming and treading down our enemies.

Now, as then he gave proof that he dwelt there, by thoſe acts of power and might:

might: ſo he made it manifeſt by all the wonderful things which Jeſus did, that he was the Sanctuary wherein he dwelt among men. From him there were ſuch emanations of power, as never flowed from the Ark it ſelf. He *ſtirred up his ſtrength* indeed (that I may borrow the ancient Language) when Jeſus appeared, *and came and ſaved them* in a diviner manner. Whenſoever he healed any deſperate Diſeaſe, it was an act of Salvation and deliverance; which told them there was a gracious preſence of God among them. When he caſt out a Devil; it was the vanquiſhing of a dreadful Enemy. And when he threw out a whole *Legion*, it was a glorious victory over a more powerful Army, than ever the *Iſraelites* by the STRENGTH of God among them, had overcome. To ſay nothing of his commanding the Winds and the boiſterous Waves, which as readily obeyed him; as the *red Sea fled when Judah was Gods Sanctuary*, cxiv. Pſal. 2. (the Divine preſence not having ſetled it ſelf then among them in any certain place) and *Jordan was driven back* before the Ark of his ſtrength. By theſe acts it plainly appeared that all things were under his Authority; not only Men and other Creatures here below;

but

but alſo Angels, Principalities and Powers: over whom he as eaſily triumphed, as the *Iſraelites* had heretofore done, by the power of God among them, over the Philiſtins, or ſuch like adverſaries. Nay, he gave his Apoſtles ſuch a power over them, that they were ready to triumph too much in theſe conqueſts. He is fain to repreſs the joy wherewith they were tranſported; and to bid them not rejoyce ſo much that the Devils were made ſubject to them, as that they themſelves were become the ſubjects of his Kingdom, and their Names written in Heaven, x. *Luk.* 20. And ſo eminent was this manifeſtation of the Divine power in him, that he did but ſpeak a word, and any thing was done that he required. In ſo much that the People were amazed, to hear him only ſay to a Devil, *Come out*, and inſtantly he left the Man and hurt him not. *What a word is this? for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean ſpirits, and they come out*, iv. Luk. 37. And upon another occaſion of the like nature, you read the ſame again, that *They were all amazed at the mighty power of God*, ix. 43. And acknowledged with juſt admiration at ſuch another ſight, that, *It was never ſo ſeen in Iſrael*, ix. Matth. 33. Among all the marvellous works of former

mer times, even thoſe done by *Moſes* himſelf, when the Divine Glory viſibly appeared on ſeveral occaſions to them, there never was any thing like to that which our Saviour now wrought; ſo quickly, without ſo much as the pains of a bare touch, by his Word only, and in all ſorts of Diſeaſes, none excepted. For at his firſt entrance upon his office, after he was anointed with the Holy-Ghoſt, he healed *all manner of ſickneſs*, and *all manner of diſeaſe*, throughout the whole Region of *Galilee*, and the adjoyning Countries, iv. *Matth.* 23, 24, 25.

III. Nor was the kindneſs and good will of God to them more plainly manifeſted from the Tabernacle and Temple, than it is to us more abundantly declared in *Jeſus Chriſt*. The Ark, the place of God's preſence, is called the TESTIMONY, xvi. *Exod.* 34. for this reaſon as well as others; becauſe it was a token of God's great love to them, and care over them; teſtifying that he dwelt among them. And out of SION, where the Houſe of his Glory, and the Ark of his Preſence was, he is ſaid, *to bleſs his people*, cxxxiv. Pſal. 3. and to give them the *bleſſing of life*, cxxxiii. 4. which may be more

more truly said of *Jesus Christ*, from whom now *the LORD hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore*, iii. Act. 26. xi. *Joh.* 25, 26. In him he showed himself most propitious to Mankind, and set him forth as his ἱλαστήριον, or *mercy seat*; iii. Rom. 25. from whence he will dispense his Divine favours towards us. We need not doubt of it, for he is the Μαρτύριον, or TESTIMONY also, in the most proper seasons, of the greatest love and kindness that ever was, 1 *Tim.* ii. 6. This he testified indeed most of all by his Death and giving himself *a ransome* for us (which the Apostle is there speaking of, and which *Polycarp* calls in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, μαρτύριον τῦ σταυρῦ, the testimony of the Cross) But it was apparent likewise by all the actions of his life. Which testified how *full*, he was, *of GRACE*, as well as of *Truth*: for *he went about doing good*, x. Act. 38. The very name that *Philo* gives the Tabernacle, which he calls * φορητὸν ἱερὸν, exactly belongs to him; who was a *moveable Temple*, a *walking mercy seat*, an Holy place, which went about; and carried God's blessings to all that drew nigh unto him. All the Power he had, was used, not to the harm of any man living; but to the benefit, relief and comfort,

* l. 3. de vita Mosis.

comfort, of every one that came to him. Whom did he ever refuſe, that intreated his help? What ſuitor did he turn away, that came to beg his charitable aſſiſtance? He never excuſed himſelf, either from the multitude of buſineſs, or the diſtance of the place, or the greatneſs of the thing they askt, or the many courteſies he had done to them already, or upon any other account whatſoever; but willingly went to do them ſervice: or, which is more, ſent his Divine influences afar off, to teſtifie his omnipreſent power, for the reſcuing of ſuch, as were at the point of death. And as for his Doctrine, you remember it was ſo ſweetly perſwaſive, that all the People *wondred at the words of grace, which proceeded out of his mouth*, iv. Luk. 22. So full of mercy it was, that he publiſhed a *Jubilee* (as you there read, *v.* 18.) to the miſerable World. So rich in love, that *S. John* could do no leſs than ſay, 1. iv. 9. That *in this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him.*

IV. And as the Sanctuary was a place ſeparate from all others for this purpoſe, that God might dwell in it; and from thence

thence send them the tokens of his powerful love: even so was Jesus also separated after a special manner, to be the Tabernacle of GOD among Men. The place where the Divine Glory made its residence was called the *Most Holy*. And the Hill on which it stood is called *the Mountain of his HOLINESS*, xlviii. Psal. 1. And the Ark which was the peculiar seat of God in the most holy place, is called *the Throne of his HOLINESS*, xlvii. 8. and the *HOLY Ark*, 2 Chron. xxxv. 3. Nay, it is called by the Name of HOLINESS, iv. *Num.* 20. as all the *Hebrews* interpret the place: and with great reason, for that which in one place, 1 *King.* viii. 8. is called *the HOLINESS*, is in another, where the same thing is described, 2 *Chron.* v. 9. called the ARK.

The ground of all which was, that these were separated by Gods special command for his uses and service alone. And the Tabernacle was built by peculiar directions which he himself gave, and by a Divine art and skill, wherewith the workmen were inspired, and no other. And just thus was the Temple of our Saviour's Body likewise set apart and separated from all common flesh, to be the dwelling place

of

of God. Man had no hand in the making of it; but it was formed in the Womb of a pure Virgin by the power of the Holy Ghoſt. Upon which ſcore, the Angel calls him before he was conceived, τὸ Ἅγιον, i. Luke 35. *that HOLY thing*, we render it (but it is the very Name of the Temple) which had not an original like other Men, being made by God alone. Nor did the good Angels only acknowledge this, but the Evil alſo call him *the HOLY one of God*, i. Mark 24. For he was again ſeparated from all other by a voice from Heaven, and by the anointing of the Holy Ghoſt, and by many other things not now to be mentioned, which declared him to be the *MOST HOLY* or *Holy of Holies*, ſpoken of by *Daniel* the Prophet, ix. 24. which *Abenezra* expounds to be meant of *Chriſt*. And the unſpotted Holineſs that was both in his Doctrine and in his life (as you ſhall hear afterward) and the innocency and purity likewiſe of his followers and attendants, were no ſmall Teſtimony added to the reſt, that God was in him. *For he did no ſin*, as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, *neither was guile found in his mouth*. And all they that *came to him* (*v.* 4, 5.) *as unto a living ſtone*, or Temple, *rejected indeed of men, but choſen of God and precious*, καὶ αὐτοὶ, *even they them-*

themselves became living Stones, a spiritual house, or Temple, *an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.* But it would be too long to note all that the holy Scriptures speak of this. Therefore,

V. Let us briefly observe how the *Omniscience* of God which appeared in our Saviour declared that He dwelt in him, as the punctual prediction of many things formerly declared his presence at the Tabernacle. There *Moses* you know made his enquiries upon all occasions. And from thence in after Ages God gave them answers concerning things unknown; when the High-Priest stood before the most holy place, with the *Urim* and *Thummim* on his breast. And therefore that the World might see God had chang'd his Seat, and now dwelt here, in his Holy Child *Jesus*, He declared things secret; and not onely foretold a number of things, both concerning himself and others, but manifested that he knew even the thoughts and purposes of Mens hearts, ii. *Joh.* 23, 24. And understood what was done at a distance from him, i. *Joh.* 47, 48. Which was so demonstrative a proof to the true *Israelite* of the presence of God in him; that im-

mediately he cries out, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.*

But the manner of his *knowing what was in man* and all other things, was the most admirable. For whereas *Moses* was fain still to repair to one place, and inquire at the Mercy seat, before he could tell the mind of God: And could not so much as resolve a difficult case about the observation of a Law, till he went to hear what the Lord would command concerning the persons who were in doubt, ix. *Numb.* 8. Our Lord had no need at all to go any whither to make such enquiries; but in every place, even in *Samaria*, knew the greatest secrets, iv. *Joh.* 18, 19. For he himself was the Tabernacle of God. He was the Tent which God had pitched among Men: separated unto him, as the Tabernacle and Temple were, by the visible descent of the Divine Glory upon him, and by its residing in him. So that whereseever he was, he had an Oracle continually within himself: and without any addresses to the most Holy place, or any other; knew all things, and revealed the mind of God to Men. And all this was so conspicuous, that it was far better known than the presence of the Lord upon the Ark.

Ark. For that was confined to one place, whereas *Jesus went about doing good.* Which may be the meaning of that famous Prophecy, iii. *Jer.* 16, 17. Where he says, *they should not make mention of the Ark any more*; that is, worship God before that, as the only place; But *Jerusalem should be the* THRONE OF THE LORD; to which all Nations should be gathered: that is, in every part of the City (and Country too) he would appear as gloriously, as he had done formerly in the most holy place of the Temple, which could be at no other time, but when Jesus appeared among them, and sent (by his Apostles) *the Law out of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem*, to all Nations. ii. *Isa.* 3, 4. The THRONE OF THE LORD, I have told you already, is in their Language, as *Maimonides* teaches us, *Every place which God separates for the manifestation of his Divine glory.* So the Heaven is called *his Throne*, lxvi. Isa. 1. And by that name *Jeremiah* calls their Sanctuary, xvii. Jer. 12. *A glorious high Throne from the beginning, is the place of our Sanctuary.* And so I told you the *Ark* is called; because that was the peculiar place in the Sanctuary where he resided. But at last you see all *Jerusalem* (by which we may

underſtand the whole Nation) was to become the *THRONE of the LORD.* As it did when Jeſus appeared (who in perſon was ſent to that Nation alone) in whom the Divine glory ſhone illuſtriouſly in all places, whereſoever he came. They beheld the Wiſdome, the Power, the Love of God in him; not only in the Temple, where he oft appeared, but in every part of the holy City. In the ſtreets, nay in the high wayes, in the fields, in the wilderneſs, upon the ſea, there was a moſt glorious appearance of God; ſuch as never was when the Ark alone was the *THRONE of the LORD.*

VI. Which puts me in mind, and then I ſhall end this; that the *Unity* of God is as much, nay more, diſcovered in our bleſſed Saviour, as it was at the Tabernacle or Temple in former times. As there was but *one place* where God put his Name among the Children of *Iſrael*, and they were all to go to the very ſame *Oracle*; whereby they were preſerved in the belief and worſhip of *one* God: So now God hath manifeſted that this is his ONLY begotten Son; and that there is no name given under Heaven whereby we can be ſaved, but only His; and that we muſt ſeek to

no other Mediator, but this *One*; in whom now God appears in ſuch a glory, as he never did any where elſe. And this is alſo to keep us in the belief that God is one; which may hence alſo appear by this *manifeſtation of God in the fleſh*. For whereas we call God by ſeveral attributes, the moſt holy, the moſt wiſe, the moſt powerful, and the like; yet we ſee all theſe were in one perſon Chriſt Jeſus. Which may well inſtruct us, that they all together are but One God; and that it is one eternal Majeſty, who is ſo holy, wiſe, powerful and good.

But, as I ſaid, this was better made known by our Saviour, than by the Divine Majeſty reſiding at the Temple. For during all the time that the Holy Oracle of God ſtood at *Jeruſalem*; there were alſo Oracles, which pretended gods maintained among the Gentiles. This upheld the Opinion concerning a multitude of gods: And all that *Moſes* or the Prophets could do, did not deſtroy this belief in the World; no, not root it out of *Iſrael*; till God appeared in our Lord and Saviour. Then the other Oracles grew mute; and it was held ridiculous to believe any more Gods than One. The Devils loſt all their

power, μετὰ τὸ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἀνθρώπου, after the coming of our Saviour among Men. They are the words of *Eusebius*, who produces a sworn enemy of Christianity to avouch what he delivers, *Porphyry* by name, who makes this ingenuous confession,* that Ἰησοῦ γεγονότος, &c. *ever since* JESUS *was honoured; none ever perceived any publick help and succour from the Gods. Æsculapius and the rest of the Gods have withdrawn themselves from men, and do not converse with them.* From whence *Eusebius* argues very rationally on this manner. How come you to know, those whom you worship, to be gods? Why did not *Æsculapius* and the rest of his Companions overthrow the power of Jesus, and make it of none effect? If he be a mortal Man, as you say (nay, perhaps you call him a jugler and a deceiver) and they indeed be Saviours and gods; What is the matter that they flee before him, and turn their backs of one that is so inconsiderable? Why do they yield up all the World to his power; and abandon all their subjects, in this shameful manner? If you have any sence, you must conclude, that he is stronger than they; and that what he speaks is true. For though he be but one, and as one would suppose, alone; yet He hath driven

* Lib. V. Præpar. Cap. 1.

driven away a vaſt number of gods, and made them leave the World. He hath aboliſhed their worſhip and ſervice, and expoſed them to ſuch contempt; that as they appear no longer gods, ſo they can do juſt nothing. They are not able ſo much as to ſhow themſelves, as they were wont, to their followers: But plainly diſcover that they were *Dæmons*, not *Gods*.

But on the contrary the worſhip of this JESUS, and that ONE GOD, who, he ſaith, ſent him into the World, is every day more and more propagated; and takes deeper root in the minds of all People. One would have thought that theſe gods, ſhould have beſtirred themſelves at his coming, more than ever. They ſhould have made combinations, and joyned all their forces againſt him. Their Oracles which were ſo famous, ſhould now, above all other times, have been frequented; and ſpoken moſt loudly, ſo that all the World might hear them, againſt this perſon, who came to deſtroy that Religion, and take away all that reverence which was paid them. Or if one Oracle had been dumb upon any particular cauſe; yet all of them together, one would think, ſhould not have loſt their voice and their credit,

in this faſhion. Theſe gods ſhould have had more care of their reputation, and authority; than to let this ſingle perſon, whom they pretended alſo to be ſo mean, to prevail thus mightily againſt them. For as *Plutarch* tells us, in thoſe very places where there was in times paſt, μεγάλη δόξα θεότητος a *great glory of the Divinity*; there was nothing to do in his days, but all was vaniſht. A ſign that indeed God was more in our Saviour, than he ever had been in any other perſon or place; and that he was no where elſe; and that he would be worſhipped only in that way, which he taught and preſcribed. For they ſaw his GLORY, the GLORY as OF THE ONLY BEGOTTEN Son, (i. Joh. 14.) who had thoſe marks of a Divine Majeſty reſiding in him, that none ever had; and from whom we may expect all that the wiſdom, power, and love of God can do for us.

What ſhould we do then, but after ſuch evident proofs that God is in him; fall down, and with the moſt humble and joyful reverence worſhip him, who, as it there follows, is *full of grace and truth*? Becauſe he is full of TRUTH we ought to reſign and ſubmit our ſelves to his government;

vernment; and becauſe he is full of GRACE we ſhould always rejoyce to think that we are under his care, and we ſhould put our truſt under the ſhaddow of his wings. And that he is ſo full of both, that we may with great ſatisfaction commit our ſelves to his guidance, confide and rejoyce in him; will appear ſtill more evidently by the next Teſtimony which he received from the HOLY GHOST.

II.

Which was upon the day of Pentecoſt, ten days after he left this world; When it gave a more publick teſtimony to him, than it had done at his Baptiſm, that he was the Son of God, exalted to ſit on the right hand of the Majeſty on high. For his Apoſtles being then aſſembled together in one place, on a ſudden there came ſuch a mighty inſpiration from him, who a little before he parted with them, *breathed on them and ſaid, Receive the Holy Ghoſt*; that the ſound of it was like that of a violent blaſt of wind, when it is a coming. Which was anciently a token of a Divine preſence approaching (iii. *Gen.* 8.) and now was a ſign that by the power of this ſpirit, they

they ſhould carry all before them. For it filled *all the houſe* where they were ſitting, as they did all the World, e're long, by their preaching. And immediately a glimpſe of that Divine Majeſty or Glory appeared on them, which came down upon our Saviour at his Baptiſm, and ever after dwelt in him; *Who now ſent the Apoſtles juſt as the Father had ſent him.* For a bright flame was ſeen upon their Heads, and they *were baptized with the Holy Ghoſt and with fire.*

So S. *Luke* reports, ii. *Act.* 3, 4. That *there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire*; and *it SAT upon each of them*: a ſign that this power ſhould abide with them alway, and accompany them every where; though this viſible flame vaniſhed. The effect of which was notorious to all, even as it was apparent that Jeſus was full of the Holy Ghoſt, though none but *John* Baptiſt ſaw it coming down upon him: For *they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and began to ſpeak with tongues*: Of which all *Jeruſalem* (as it there follows) yea men of all Nations were witneſſes; who heard them ſpeak in their own tongues, *the wonderful works of God*, verſ. 11. They proclaimed, that is, to all the People, whom the

the report of this ſtrange news had brought together, what wonders God had wrought by Jeſus, and what he had now done for him; having *raiſed him from the dead*, verſ. 24. and *exalted him by his right hand*, verſ. 33. *and made him, both* LORD *and* CHRIST, verſ. 36. That is, He was, now they might ſee if they would not ſhut their eyes, inthroned by God in the Heavens, and compleatly inveſted with that royal power, of which he had received ſome portion before; being now made LORD of all things, and the KING of God's People. Of which, *we*, ſay the Apoſtles, v. 32. *are his Witneſſes* (who ſaw him after he roſe again, and beheld him aſcend into Heaven) *and ſo is the Holy Ghoſt*, which he ſent from thence, as they all now ſaw and heard in divers ſenſible effects, which teſtified that he was at the right hand of God.

And here it will be fit to obſerve *three* things,

First, That the HOLY GHOST was his WITNESS, (as the Apoſtles you ſee call Him) as the coming of it, was the fulfilling of what he had predicted and promiſed, a little before his *going away* from them. At the very mention of that word, they

they were very diſconſolate; and *ſorrow filled their heart.* Whereupon he cheers them up with this aſſurance that he would not leave them comfortleſs, like ſo many fatherleſs Children, but *pray the Father, and he would give them another Comforter, who ſhould abide with them for ever*; and never go away from them, as he was about to do, xiv. *Joh.* 16. This he tells them was the *ſpirit of truth*, verſ. 17. *whom the Father would ſend in his Name*, verſ. 26. where he repeats this over again, and tells them what the *Holy Ghoſt* would do for them. And therefore charges them not to be troubled or afraid, but rather rejoyce to hear him ſay he was going to the Father, *who was Greater than he*; and therefore would give him power, when he went to him, to do more for them, than he could do now, *verſ.* 28. And then he adds the reaſon why he ſaid all this, verſ. 29. *Now I have told you before it come to paſs; that when it is come to paſs, you might believe.* That is, be confirmed in the belief of all that I have ſaid, and fully perſwaded I have not boaſted of a power and authority, which doth not belong to me. They might well be confident of it themſelves, and bid *all the Houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly that God had made the ſame Jeſus whom they* cruci-

crucified, both Lord and Christ; when they saw this come to pass, which he had foretold and promised so often. Before his Death, xv. *Joh.* 26, 27. xvi. 7. After his Resurrection, xxiv. *Luke* 49. Just before his Ascension, i. *Act.* 4. 8. Where he bids them not stir from *Jerusalem*, but *wait for the promise of the Father, which they had heard of him*, and which would give them Power to be his Witnesses every where.

It was an evident argument, when they received it, of these two Divine Properties in Him; *Foreknowledge*, and *Omnipotence*. They had reason to believe there was a Divine Majesty in him, when he was with them on Earth; and to trust to all he had said either of himself, or them, or those that should believe on his Name; and to look upon Him now as the King of Glory, with all power in Heaven and Earth. For how could he have taken the boldness to foretell and promise such a thing as this from God the Father, what hope had he to make it good; if he had not been sure that *the Father and He were one*; (as he speaks *vers.* 20. of that xiv. *Joh.*) and that what He said was by his Authority, who would justifie his word? Nothing

thing could have been more vain, or done him greater discredit after all the glory he had got, than to give this as a sign of his truth; if he himself had not been sure that *God had given all things into his hand, and that he came out from God, and was going unto God*, as it is xiii. *Joh.* 3. And what greater argument could there be, that he did not assume a Dignity or Title, which he had no right unto; than the verifying his word in so hard and difficult a case as this, even then when his Enemies thought he could do nothing, because he was dead and buried? This must needs make the Apostles as sure as he was; (for his confident belief could not work belief in them) and therefore He did fulfil his promise; and indued them with such power from on high, that in a moment He brought all things which he had taught them to their remembrance; enabled them to speak with all manner of Tongues, to make a Man whole with speaking a word, nay to raise the Dead, and to give the *Holy Ghost* likewise to others who believed their word.

How came He by this power, if indeed He was not the Lord of all? Why did not his Word dye with Himself and fall to the ground,

ground, if he usurped upon the prerogative of God, and laid claim to a glory which was none of his? How could it come into any Mans mind, let me ask again, to promise such a thing as this; if he did not know what he could do? And could any man do such a thing, if he were not more than a man; even the King of infinite power at the right hand of God? So the Apostles could not but conclude when they felt the effects of his royal power in their own hearts; and when they could make others feel them, by innumerable benefits which they bestowed, both on their Souls and Bodies. To be able to do such things on Earth as he had done, shewed plainly what He was: but to be able to make others do more wonderful things, when He had left the World; was still a more convincing Argument, that all things were put in subjection under his Feet. Nothing now was more evident to them than this great Truth; whatsoever distrust of it they might have before. With this mighty Inspiration all their doubts were blown away, like the Dust before the Wind. This fire which appeared on their Heads, purged their Souls quite from all the reliques of Infidelity; if there were any remaining. They could do nothing

now

now but speak the praises of Jesus, and proclaim Him with these Tongues to all the world to be the Lord; with a zeal as hot as fire.

The People indeed, it may be said, did not hear him foretell this glorious day, and make any such promise of the Holy Ghost, and therefore how could it convince them? I answer, it is confessed that He did not speak of this so plainly to them, as He did to the Apostles; and therefore I have not alledged it all this time for that purpose: but only to show that they to whom he so often gave hopes of the coming of the Holy Ghost upon them, had reason to rely upon its Testimony when it came; even upon this account, that it was the performance of his gracious promise to them. There are many proofs which we produce, seem to carry less force in them than really they have; when careless minds stretch them too far, to prove more than was intended. The *Jews* were to be convinced by it upon another score, not by the fulfilling of his particular promises to the Apostles; which could work no further upon the People, than they believed their testimony who came with such power from Jesus to them. But I must add also

alſo, that our Saviour had ſaid ſomething of this to all the people at a publick Feaſt, vii. *John* 38, 39. And when he was arraigned he openly declared to the High Prieſt and the whole Senate, that they ſhould preſently receive ſenſible tokens of his Majeſty, which now they ſo affronted. For when they adjured him to tell them whether he was *the Chriſt the Son of God*, xxvi. *Matth.* 63. though he knew they would neither believe him, if he told them, nor give him a good reaſon, if he argued with them, why they did not believe (xxii. *Luke* 67, 68.) yet he told them in expreſs terms, that he was, *ver.* 64. And then adds theſe remarkable words; *Nevertheleſs, I ſay unto you* (i. e. though now you do not believe what I have told you, yet mind what I ſay) *hereafter* (from this moment, ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν, xxii. *Luke* 69. or very few days hence) *you ſhall ſee the Son of man ſitting on the right hand of power.* Which can refer to nothing but the miſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, which preſently enſued, and was a certain argument that he was at God's right hand, ii. *Acts* 33. When this came they could not but *ſee*, unleſs they would be wilfully blind, that he was poſſeſſed of the Kingdom, he had ſo much ſpoken of.

It was an irrefragable testimony that he was the Son of the Blessed, and could the less be gainsaid, because he told them beforehand they should see what they would not then believe. That is, have a manifest demonstration of his glorious Majesty in the Heavens. Which if it would not move them, nothing remained but to see him, after another fashion, coming in the clouds of Heaven, as it there follows. To destroy, that is, such incredulous wretches, who killed their King, and persisted so obstinately in their rebellion; that they resisted the Holy Ghost, whom he sent to convince them of their crime, and convert them to his obedience. So it is interpreted, xxii. Luke 27, 31.

II. For the power of it was so great, that setting aside this consideration, if he had said nothing at all to them or his Apostles of his sending the Holy Ghost; yet its coming in this manner, was an evident testimony both to them and all others, that he made a just claim to be their King. He could not else have scattered such royal gifts so bountifully among them, as the manner of Emperors was in their Triumphs, and of Kings at their Coronation. This showed that indeed he had

had the power, which the *Jews* denied him. It vindicated his rights, which they would have taken from him. It made it appear, he was what he pretended; and that not *He*, but *they* were the guilty perſons; who had condemned him, for ſaying, he was the *Son of God*. This was the very end of its coming, as our Saviour alſo told his Apoſtles a little before his death, xvi. *John* 7, 8, 9. where He ſaith, that if he went away he would ſend the PARACLETE, that is, his *Advocate* unto them; whoſe office it ſhould be, to *convince the World of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment*. Of this place I ſhall be able, I hope, to give a full account hereafter, together with all thoſe that relate to the Holy Ghoſt; and therefore I ſhall ſay no more of it now than this; That the end of the PARACLETE'S coming was to plead the Cauſe of our Saviour; to maintain his innocence; and to prove againſt all accuſers, that though he was condemned by men, yet he was acquitted by God, and had ſaid nothing but the truth.

For obſerve but the crime whereof he was accuſed, and for which he was ſentenced by the *Jews*, and you will ſoon ſee

that nothing could clear him ſo much as this. The great thing they laid to his charge, as you have heard already, was that he affirmed, when they adjured him to ſpeak his thought, that he was *the Chriſt the Son of the Bleſſed.* This was the blaſphemy, which they pretended wounded their hearts with grief when they heard it, and for which they adjudged him to be worthy of death. Now what could demonſtrate the vileneſs of this calumny, and prove him not guilty, more than ſuch a power poſſeſſing his followers even after he was dead, as they ſaw in himſelf when he was alive? Nay, a far greater, which declared, as they truly ſaid, that he was *Lord of all*? x. *Acts* 36. He could not have done ſuch things, as they beheld were wrought at the invoking of his Name, if he were not truly the *Son of God.* The Apoſtles might have called long enough upon him, before they had made a man lame from his Mother's womb, walk up and down and leap and praiſe God; if he whom they crucified, were not exalted by God's right hand, to be a *Prince and a Saviour.* And it had been the vaineſt thing of all, for the Apoſtles to go and preach up the authority of a dead man, and who was ignominiouſly crucified,

ed, as a great Malefactor; if they had not known that the *Holy Ghoſt* from him was ready at hand in every place and time, to be his ADVOCATE, and take his part againſt all gain-ſayers.

This Heavenly *Witneſs* never failed to appear when there was need of him, to juſtifie our Saviour, and to ſet all things right in the opinion of the World; by reverſing their falſe judgment, and by eſtabliſhing and verifying the ſentence he had paſſed on himſelf; when he ſaid that he was the *Son of God.* The Tables were now turned by the appearance of this PARACLETE, who pleaded ſo ſtrongly and convincingly, that many who had before accounted him an evil doer, were now forced to alter their mind and confeſs him to be a righteous perſon. They who had reviled him, now gave him worſhip and honour. They that cried Crucifie him, ſaid as the Centurion, when they heard the HOLY GHOST ſpeak on his behalf, *Sure this was the Son of God.* And all thoſe who were ſo hardy as to *reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt* (vii. *Acts* 51.) were fain to oppoſe it with rage and throwing ſtones; for in any other manner they were not able *to reſiſt the wiſdom and the*

ſpirit, whereby S. *Steven* (a man *full of the Holy Ghoſt*) ſpake to them and reaſoned with them, vi. *Acts* 9, 10.

So great a teſtimony was this of the HOLY GHOST to *Jeſus*, that the Apoſtles were not fit to be his *Witneſſes*, till they had received it, xxiv. *Luke* 48. i. *Acts* 8. But after it came upon them and joyned its teſtimony with theirs, then they defended his cauſe ſo ſucceſsfully, that *a great company of the Prieſts*, the greateſt enemies to it, yielded themſelves and became *obedient to the faith*, vi. *Acts* 7. Then if any one asked, how dare you contradict the ſentence of the High Court, to which all men are bound upon pain of death to ſubmit (xvii. *Deut.* 9, 12.) what can you ſay to juſtifie this preſumption, in maintaining his Righteouſneſs, whom the Grand Council of the Nation hath condemned to ſuffer death? They could ſoon make this reply, Let the HOLY GHOST anſwer you; hear what he ſays to you: If He do not ſpeak enough for us and for *Jeſus* to ſatisfie you, then we refuſe not to die; you may deal with us as the deſpiſers of God and his Law. And ſo mightily were they aſtoniſhed and perplexed by the pleadings of the HOLY GHOST,

GHOST, that the Sanhedrim (the Supreme Court of Judicature among them) knew not what to ſay to the Apoſtles, nor what to do with them. They only clapt them in priſon for preaching *Jeſus* (iv. *Acts* 3.) and threatned farther ſeverity if they did not deſiſt (*ver.* 21.) but they durſt not proceed to paſs the ſentence of death upon them, according as the Law directed; the people glorifying God ſo heartily for what they ſaw them do by the power of the Holy Ghoſt. Nay, ſo much were ſome of this great Council ſtaggered, that according to the perſwaſion of *Gamaliel*, a great Maſter among them, they let the Apoſtles go free, after a ſecond impriſonment, leſt *perhaps they ſhould be found fighters againſt God, ver.* 39. If this be an humane project, ſays that wiſe man, do not trouble your ſelves about it; for it will come to naught, as the vain attempts of others have done, who at the firſt drew much people after them. But if theſe men prove to be authorized by God, and he will have it ſo; who can overthrow it? We had beſt take heed how we proceed in a buſineſs, wherein we may chance to have God againſt us. It is better in my judgment to be quiet, and ſee what the iſſue will be, leſt in ſtead of contending

with men, we be found to oppose God Almighty himself.

III. And the issue was this (which is the last thing) that by the power of this *Advocate* alone, and no other, our Lord *Jesus* actually obtained a Kingdom in spite of all the opposition that could be made against him. This was the greatest testimony of the *Holy Ghost* to him, which effectually proved him to be a King, by winning him a Kingdom; and perswading men to submit unto him, though he was invisible, and not like to reward their services in this World at all, but only in another. It proclaimed him all abroad in the World to be the Lord of life and glory, and by the mere *preaching of the Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven* (as S. *Peter* speaks, 1 i. 12.) the Nations were subdued to him and acknowledged him for their Sovereign.

The High Priest and Council of *Jerusalem*, as it there follows in v. *Acts* 40. desiring to discourage the Apostles in this preaching, ordered them to be beaten, and then commanded them to speak no more in the name of *Jesus*, for fear of a worse punishment that might follow.

Alas!

Alas? vain men, that thought to choak this Truth, and bury this report concerning *Jeſus*. Did they think it was in their power to murder his Name, as they had done Him? and by ſuch means as theſe prevent his Faith from ſpreading it ſelf any further? They were mightily miſtaken in the courage of theſe *Twelve men*, who *rejoyced that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for his Name:* and as *unlearned* and *ignorant* as they found them (iv. *Acts* 13.) not only perſwaded many in that Country to believe *Jeſus* to be the Lord, but carried the fame of him to all Nations. For they received another kind of *Mandate* from him, which they were reſolved to obey; nothing doubting but the power of the Holy Ghoſt would go along with them to proſper their attempt. The *Jewiſh* Rulers ſaid, *Speak not at all, nor teach in the name of Jeſus*, iv. *Acts* 18. But *Jeſus* their Maſter had ſaid, *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Goſpel to every Creature*, xvi. *Mark* 15. Or as it is in S. *Matthew* xxviii. 19, 20. *Go ye and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt: Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you.* They durſt not therefore but go, eſpecially when

the

the power of the Holy Ghost came down upon them on purpose, that they might be able to speak in his name, and win him subjects in all the world, by proving that he was perfectly *Lord and Christ*. And so you read in S. *Luke* xxiv. 47, 48, 49. *It behoved Christ to die and rise again, that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name among all Nations, And ye are witnesses of these things. And behold I send you the promise of my Father: but tarry ye at Jerusalem* (that is, before you go about this business) *until ye be indued with power from on high.*

Now here do but consider with me, these *three* things. *First*, the vastness of this design; *secondly*, the poorness of the means; and *thirdly*, the weakness and ineptitude of the Instruments which were to be imployed by him: and you will soon see what service the *Holy Ghost* did him; without whose power he would never have attempted such things, or never have atchieved them. They are all in that place now mentioned, xxviii. *Matth.* 19, *Go and teach all Nations*, &c. See here what a compass he takes for his Kingdom, no less than all the World. Wherein he intends to settle new Laws, and advance

a government proper to himself, eſtabliſhed upon a Doctrine not at all taking with fleſh and bloud. Who is there that ever went about any ſuch thing, or had ſuch a thought in his mind? not only to conquer, but to change the Religion of all the world, and aboliſh thoſe Laws and Cuſtoms which had ſtood for ſo many Ages? What Arms or Ammunition did he provide them withal for this purpoſe? With what forces did he ſend them? Or by what means did he hope to win Kings and Princes to reſign their Crowns to him, and ſubmit themſelves to his Orders?

Behold, here a new wonder, which is the ſecond thing I now named: He bid them go and PREACH. How could any one fancy he ſhould overcome Nations with his breath? Could he take words to have ſuch force in them, as to perſwade whole Countries that never ſaw him to become his ſubjects? What ſtrange Orators muſt theſe be, who could draw men of ſuch different languages, natures and inclinations, in all the world after them? Where were they bred to learn ſuch powerful Rhetorick, as ſhould charm the hearts of all that heard them? From what School did they come, or by whom were

were they inſtructed in the art of catching Souls? Alas! they were very illiterate and ignorant men, Fiſhermen and ſuch like ruſtick people, whom Chriſt called to be Fiſhers for Souls, and ſent to draw hearts to him. And I remember, *Plato* in his *Phædrus*, when he would expreſs a block, a rude and unbred fellow, ſays he was ὁν ναύταις τεθραμμένον, bred up among *Mariners*. Very unlikely Inſtruments theſe were for his purpoſe; if he had been to take counſel of Philoſophers, and intended to teach men by no ſtronger arguments than theirs. They were the moſt unfit men that could be choſen to be his Embaſſadors; if he had not been another kind of Lord and Maſter, and they had not gone with other kind of inſtructions, than the world had known before.

And that is the *third* wonder, enough to aſtoniſh any conſidering man, that they who, as *Euſebius* notes, could ſcarce ſpeak their own language well, but were mockt for *Galileans*, whoſe dialect was the moſt broad and ungentile of all the Nation; that theſe, I ſay, ſhould go to ſpeak to all the Nations of the World, with hope to perſwade them. Alas! they were not fit to be Maſters to ſo much as one ſingle perſon,

ſon, much leſs to teach a Country School; how then could they undertake to teach the whole World? What King, what Law-giver, what Philoſopher, either *Greek* or *Barbarian*, as the ſame *Euſebius* proceeds*, ever dreamt of any ſuch deſign as this? They held their labour well beſtow'd, if they could eſtabliſh their Doctrine and Laws in one City, or perhaps in one Country; but never thought themſelves able to ſpread them any further. Whereas *Jeſus* οὐδὲν ξυνηθὲς ἀνθρωπινον διανοηθεὶς, meditating nothing that was common to mortal men, nothing that was merely humane; ſays confidently to theſe contemptible men whom he had choſen to be his Emiſſaries; *Go*, now that I bid you, *and teach all Nations.*

* *Lib. 3. demonſtr. Evang.*

But ſuppoſe the Diſciples ſhould have ſaid to him, as well they might; Though we are ready to do any thing for thy ſake, yet how ſhall we accompliſh this? How for example ſhall we ſpeak to the *Romans*, of whoſe language we are ignorant? Or how ſhall we teach the *Egyptians*, and the *Indians*, and the *Scythians*; who have but one tongue which we learnt of our Mothers, and that but a rude one neither? We ſhall ſtand dumb before them and ſay nothing.

nothing. They will take us for a company of fools, and we ſhall look like mere ſtatues and images of men. Or if we could ſpeak their languages, what hope have we to prevail with them? Who will be perſwaded by ſuch as we, to forſake the Religion of their Countrie, and to embrace thine who art a ſtranger to them? Truly this had been but a rational queſtion; if our Saviour had not taken care to prevent it, by adding thoſe words to his *Mandate*; *Lo, I am with you alway to the end of the world.* He had ſaid a little before, *ver.* 18. *All power in Heaven and Earth is given to me.* Go therefore and teach all Nations; advance my authority, and ſpread my Kingdom; and do not doubt but you ſhall effect the buſineſs; for I who have all power will be with you. And ſo he was, by the power of the Holy Ghoſt who was his *Advocate*; for he gave them, preſently after, the gift of tongues; he accompanied them every where, if they did but mention his Name, with ſigns and miracles; yea the very ſhadow of ſome of them did more than all the power of Medicines. This was a very great demonſtration of his ſupreme dominion over all Creatures. Nothing could be more effectual to induce men to obey him,

to

to whom they saw every thing else was subject. Without this they could never have moved men to believe that he was the Lord; but this gave it sufficient credit.

For suppose they had stood up in the places of popular concourse, and said, We come to preach to you in the name of *Jesus*, and require you to submit your selves to him, whom God hath made the *Lord of all*. He was born of the seed of *David*, a great King in *Israel*, did many wonders in that Nation, though he was hated and rejected by them, and delivered to *Pontius Pilate*; by whom he was crucified; but God raised him out of his grave, and we saw him go to Heaven, where he is inthroned in the most glorious Majesty, and reigns over all Angels, as well as mankind. Cast away therefore your ancient Gods, who are his subjects. Forsake presently all your superstitious Rites and Ceremonies. Believe on this person; submit to his government, and obey his commands. Though you get nothing in this world by it, but perhaps may lose all you have; he will reward you for it in his Heavenly Kingdom. What force do you think there would have been in such a

speech,

speech, to perswade the Nations far distant from *Jerusalem*, to fall down before him as their Sovereign? Would they not have smiled and said, What do these babblers mean to bring us these strange stories from a foreign land? Why should *we* acknowledge him to be our King, whom his own Country-men would not suffer to reign over them? Shall we become the subjects of one whom we never saw, nor heard of until now? and venture the loss of all our liberties, and perchance of our lives, for one whom they confess to be crucified and dead? What likelihood is there, that he should rise again from the dead, who could not keep himself, when he was alive, from being put to death?

Truly, saith *Eusebius*, when I consider the mere doctrine they were to preach, I cannot see how they could hope to draw the people to their belief. But then when I consider how they did prevail every where, at *Rome*, at *Alexandria*, at *Antioch*, in all other places; I must have recourse to a Divine power, which succeeded this Doctrine. *Jesus* plainly declared by putting them upon the attempt, that he was confident he had all power to get himself a Kingdom by this preaching.

And

And by the iſſue it appeared that it was no preſumption wherewith he was poſſeſſed, inſtead of a well grounded confidence. They preached, as he bad them; but it was not with ſuch Rhetorick, as is in uſe among us: not *with the enticing words of mans wiſdom*, with eloquent expreſſions, enchanting language, or mere plauſible arguments; but *in the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4. The HOLY GHOST from Heaven preſently appeared whereſoever they preached, to juſtifie their words, and to teſtifie, by many miraculous operations, that *Jeſus* was no leſs than they affirmed. This evident demonſtration perſwaded mens minds. This was ſuch a power, that the people were ready to take *them* for Gods; and imagined that *Mercury* and *Jupiter* were come down from Heaven to them: and thereupon prepared publick ſacrifices, to be offered in their honour, xiv. *Acts* 13. Natural reaſon told them that ſuch things could not be done by mortal nature; but they muſt be concluded to be the works of ſome God, though no body told them that they were. And therefore this was all they had to do, for their own ſatisfaction, to enquire by what power and authority the Apoſtles did theſe wonders, ſince they

themſelves confeſſed that they were but men. And here now they took occaſion to let them know, that it was *Jeſus* who did theſe Miracles. Him they preached; and him they hereby proved to be the Lords ANOINTED; who by this power would prevail, notwithſtanding the fierce oppoſition that was made againſt his authority.

For, as you read in a devout addreſs which the whole company of believers made to God, *the Rulers were gathered together, and the Kings of the Earth ſtood up againſt the Lord and againſt his Chriſt.* At their firſt entrance upon this work, there were mighty endeavours to overthrow it; juſt as there had been againſt his holy child *Jeſus, whom he had ANOINTED,* that is, promoted to a greater glory than he had on Earth. And therefore they deſire God to go along with them, and *ſtretch forth his hand to heal; and that ſigns and wonders might be done by the name of his holy child Jeſus;* for the propagating of this Religion, which it was not in their own power to advance, iv. *Acts* 26, 27, 30. Now this was a further teſtimony of the power and glory of *Jeſus,* that when a ſolemn addreſs was made to God, and they repreſented to him

him their deſign; they were ſo far from receiving any diſcountenance from him, that he incouraged and promoted this undertaking. For the place where they prayed *was ſhaken*, by a powerful inſpiration which came upon them all, as it had done upon the Apoſtles: *And they were ALL filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and they ſpake the word of God with boldneſs*, ver. 31.

III.

And this leads me to the laſt Teſtimony which the HOLY GHOST gave to him, by deſcending upon other perſons as well as upon the Apoſtles; though not in ſuch a viſible form as it did on the day of *Pentecoſt*. The place indeed was SHAKEN where theſe believers were aſſembled, by the like *mighty wind* I ſuppoſe as filled the houſe where the Apoſtles received the *Holy Ghoſt*, ii. *Acts* 2. But there were no fiery tongues now appeared, as there did then: Nor do we afterwards read of any ſuch ſenſible ſign of an inviſible power coming upon them, as this *ſhaking* of the place was, when the Holy Ghoſt firſt deſcended upon the body of the Church. But whenſoever the Apoſtles laid their hands upon any perſon who be-

lieved in *Jeſus* and was baptized; preſently the *Holy Ghoſt* fell down upon them, and they ſpake with tongues and propheſied, viii. *Acts* 15, 17. xix. 6. This *laying on of their hands*, was ever after the only external ſign of the Divine power (for that's the meaning of *ſtretching out the hand*, in the place juſt before named, iv. *Acts* 30.) wherewith they ſhould be endued at the requeſt of the Apoſtles. Which was a plain demonſtration of the royal Majeſty and munificence of *Jeſus*, whoſe Servants and Miniſters theſe were: and hereby the HOLY GHOST bare record to him, that he was the *Son of God*.

So this very Apoſtle teaches us in the *ſecond* Chapter of this Epiſtle, where he tells them to whom he writes, that he need not be very ſolicitous to preſcribe them Antidotes againſt thoſe Antichriſtian doctrines, which then began to poiſon the Church: becauſe they had *an Unction from the holy One, and knew all things*, 1 *John* ii. 20. The HOLY GHOST, that is, was their ſecurity from infection; which is here called the UNCTION or *anointing*, 1. becauſe by the coming down of this upon our Saviour, He was made the CHRIST or anointed of God, x. *Acts* 38.

38. And 2. the Apoſtles when they received it were made the principal Officers in his Kingdom, and endued with ſuch a power to remit ſins and unlooſe men from the puniſhment of them as he had, xx. *Joh.* 22, 23. And 3. all others to whom they imparted this gift were openly declared *the children of God*, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joynt-heirs with Chriſt, viii. *Rom.* 16, 17. This UNCTION made them all *Kings and Prieſts unto God, and they reigned with him on Earth*, v. *Rev.* 10. Enjoyed, that is, many royal priviledges and liberties at preſent, for which they were bound perpetually to praiſe him; beſide the right it gave them to an Heavenly Kingdom, where they ſhould *ſit down with him in his Throne*, as He was in the Throne of his Father, iii. *Rev.* 21. For the Thrones of the Eaſtern Princes were wide and large, as I told you before, where others might ſit down by them, if they pleaſed to admit any to that high honour, which this King of Kings promiſes to grant to his faithful followers.

No wonder then that they who were deſigned to ſo great glory, were alſo made partaker of the *Earneſt* of it, as this *Unction*

on by the Holy Spirit is called, 2 *Cor.* i. 22. After God had filled the Apoſtles and other Apoſtolical men with the Holy Ghoſt, who were ready to guide and direct all Chriſtian people while they lived: There were great numbers alſo in the Body of the Church, who received ſo many of its gifts *from the HOLY one* (that is, God, 2 *Cor.* i. 21.) that it enabled them to diſcern truth from falſhood; and diſcover all thoſe cheats and impoſtures which ſome went about to put upon them, under the name of Chriſtian Doctrine. A very great Doctor the Holy Ghoſt was, when they were anointed with it; for thereby they KNEW ALL THINGS: that is, their whole Religion, in which it made them ſo perfect, that thoſe pretenders to new Revelations could teach them nothing which they knew not already. For it taught them that *Jeſus* from whom it came, was the *Son of God*, and had revealed all God's will plainly and fully to them. So S. *John* tells them in the following verſes, 21, 22. *I have not written unto you, becauſe ye know not the truth; but becauſe ye know it, and that no lye is of the truth. Who is a lyar, but he that denieth that Jeſus is the Chriſt?* &c. That is, I do not ſpeak of this, becauſe you are ignorant of Chriſtianity, but becauſe

cauſe you are well acquainted with it; and thereby able to judge when any body contradicts it, and to reject all thoſe as lyars, who deny *Jeſus* to be anointed by God, the Lord of all. I know you are well principled in this truth by the UNCTION which he hath given you from the Father: All that I deſire is (as he adds, *ver.* 24.) that you would ſuffer that Truth *which you have heard from the beginning*, to abide in you. And indeed it was very unreaſonable to ſtart from that which had ever been acknowledged ſince the Holy Ghoſt firſt deſcended on *Jeſus* himſelf; and which the ſame UNCTION ſtill teſtified, whenſoever the Apoſtles, who preached *Jeſus*, did but lay their hands on any bodies head, and pray to *Jeſus* that he would beſtow it on them. They could not be ſeduced if they did but attend, as he ſays, *ver.* 26, 27. to this *anointing which they had received, and which was yet among them.* There was no need of any other teacher, but this to inſtruct them. Which gave ſuch an evident demonſtration of the power and glory of the Lord *Jeſus*, and was ſo far from being a lye or deceiving them, that if they did but do it as it *taught* them, they muſt *needs abide in him.*

This you ſee was accounted and that juſtly, an infallible witneſs to him. He could never have ſent ſuch an UNCTION, nor would the Holy Ghoſt have ever come in his Name, if he had not been the King of Heaven. They that received this had an invincible proof of his glory and majeſty within themſelves. They could not doubt of it any more than they could of what they felt. Which proved likewiſe ſo convincing to others, that it made unbelievers fall down on their faces and worſhip God; *and report that God was in them of a truth,* 1 *Cor.* xiv. 25. For by this the Divine Majeſty did in a proper ſence *DWELL among Chriſtian people, and walk with them,* as it did among the ancient *Iſraelites,* 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. This was a glorious Divine Preſence in the Church, whereby God and our Saviour *made their ABODE with them,* xiv. *John* 23. and they became *the HABITATION of God* (or his Dwelling place) *through the Spirit,* ii. *Epheſ.* 22.

Which ſo conſtantly bare witneſs to him, that no man who had this Spirit could poſſibly deny him; but every one that ſpake by the Holy Ghoſt acknowledg-

ed

ed *Jeſus to be the* LORD, 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. And they were no ſmall number, who were made partakers of it. For S. *Peter* promiſes it at the very firſt deſcent of it, to all that would repent and be baptized in the name of *Jeſus*: at which word *three thouſand Souls were added to them*, ii. *Acts* 38, 41. And afterwards a vaſt company more, as you may read in the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*. Where ſome were endued with one power of the Holy Ghoſt, ſome with another (Chap. xii.) but *in every thing they were enriched by him, ſo that they came behind in* NO GIFT, Chap. i. 5, 7. Wherein our Lord far excelled *Moſes* who could not give his Spirit unto others, much leſs unto the *Gentiles*: whereas *Jeſus* ſent great abundance of his Spirit, as you ſee upon his Diſciples, and gave even to the *Gentiles the like gift as he did unto them*, xi. *Acts* 17. For as S. *Peter* was preaching to *Cornelius* and his friends, *the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them which heard the word*; to the great aſtoniſhment of the *Jewiſh* Chriſtians, who wondred *to hear them ſpeak with tongues, and magnifie God*, x. *Acts* 44, 45, 46. But they ſhould have conſidered that now he began to fulfil completely that prophecy of *Joel* (mentioned ii. *Acts* 17.) which promiſed

miſed that God would *pour out of his Spirit upon ALL fleſh.* Now the incloſures were firſt broken down, and that Divine Preſence which had hitherto been confined to one Nation, appeared in a moſt amazing luſtre to the reſt of the World. In ſo much that in a little time great multitudes of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues joyned their hearts and voices with the Heavenly Quire, ſaying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hoſts: the whole Earth is full of his* GLORY. Thus *Eſaias* heard the Angels ſing, vi. 3. when *he beheld our Saviours glory and ſpake of him,* xii. *John* 39. And the Church of Chriſt from the beginning hath taken theſe words from their mouths, and made them their own; (iv. *Rev.* 8.) when they actually ſaw this GLORY OF THE LORD filling the Earth, with its moſt holy Preſence. For our Lord did not ceaſe to pour out more and more of his Spirit *on all fleſh,* even after the Apoſtles were dead: But as *Juſtin Martyr* tells the *Jew,* in his time (which was above an hundred years after this)

* *Dial. cum Tryph.* ἃ παρ' ὑμῖν ἔστιν ἰδεῖν ἐν ἁπλείαις*, &c. *One might have ſeen among Chriſtians both women and men, who had gifts from the Spirit of God.* And ſo one might in the days of

* *Lib. 1. contr. Celſ.* *Origen** (who lived as many years after that)

that) who to convince *Celſus*, that it was no Fable which was reported of the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt on our Saviour, affirms that ἔτι ἴχνη τῆ ἁγίᾳ ἐκείνῃ πνεύματος, &c. *There were ſtill remaining among them ſome footſteps of that Holy Spirit, which was ſeen in the form of a Dove. For they diſpoſſeſſed Devils, performed many cures, and foreſaw ſome things, according to the will and pleaſure of the* WORD, *concerning what was to come.* Nay, it were eaſie to ſhow that this Heavenly power deſcended ſtill much lower, and did not quite leave the World in theſe Ages: and that it did not work in ſome obſcure corners only, but in the moſt noted places in the World. For the ſame *Juſtin* ſays in his firſt Apology, that there were many healed by the Name of *Jeſus* Chriſt in the City of *Rome*; whom no other perſon could heal. So that look how many Souls there were full of the Holy Ghoſt, ſo many laſting *Witneſſes* there were to our Saviour of his power and glory in every place.

But intending hereafter to treat of all theſe gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt* alone by themſelves; I ſhay ſay no more of them now: having ſufficiently ſhown, how they were his *Teſtimony* to our Saviour.

It

It is poſſible, I confeſs, that there may be another thing included in the name of the HOLY GHOST; and that is the old Prophets, who received gifts from Heaven, whereby they ſometimes ſpake of the Meſſiah. So the HOLY GHOST is ſaid in the x. *Hebr.* 15. to be a witneſs of the perfection of our Saviours oblation; and for a proof of it the teſtimony of the Prophet *Jeremiah* is alledged, whoſe words are called the *witneſs of the Holy Ghoſt*. From whence I might take occaſion to ſhow that all the predictions of the Prophets do ſo exactly agree to *Jeſus*, and are ſo perfectly fulfilled in him, that we muſt needs grant him (if we receive this teſtimony of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and take them to have been inſpired thereby) to be the Son of God, the King of *Iſrael*, who they had long put that Nation in hope, ſhould come and reign over them. But this would be a work of too great length, and my intention is not to ſwell this Treatiſe into an huge Volume; which makes me only mention this notion, that you may conſider with your ſelves, as you have occaſion, what a reſemblance there is between *Jeſus* and that perſon whom the Prophets deſcribe unto us. For this will prove a great confirmation of your faith in him;

him; there being no doubt in the minds of the bittereſt enemies of our Saviour, but that thoſe *Holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.*

I have done now with theſe *witneſſes*, who ſpeak unto us from *Heaven*; and who *are one*, you ſee, in their teſtimony, as well as in their nature. They all agree in this, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.* There is not the leaſt difference between them; no doubtfulneſs in their teſtimony; no backwardneſs to give it; no obſcurity that ſhould make it difficult for us to underſtand it: But with one mouth (as we ſay) they unanimouſly, plainly, readily and clearly pronounce him to be ſuch a Divine perſon, that if we ſhould not hear him, and obey him, and depend upon him, I know not what we ſhall be able to ſay to ſo many Witneſſes, who will be ready to appear againſt us; whoſe teſtimony without any cauſe was ſlighted by us. Look how many voices have been heard from Heaven; how many witneſſes have openly appeared in his behalf: ſo many Divine reaſons you are to conceive your ſelf to be provided withall, for every word that *Jeſus* hath ſpoken. Which you are therefore to take for infallible, and to keep, as the

Apoſtle

Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Tim.* vi: 14.) *without ſpot and unrebukeable*, until his ſecond appearing. Liſten to thoſe words of grace which come out of his mouth. Abandon thoſe ſins which he requires you to forſake; and betake your ſelves to the practice of thoſe vertues which he ſo ſtrictly injoyns: For the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST declare that this is the Will of Heaven; And what is there in this world ſo conſiderable as to perſwade the contrary? If he be not the *Son of God*, if he do not prove it by undeniable arguments, then do as you liſt: But if he be, then you are bound to yield him the humbleſt ſubjection, and it will be a ſtrange ſtupidity to diſpute the matter with him. There can be no colour for your refuſal, ſhould you deny to be governed by him, who comes with ſuch Authority; that the *fulneſs of the Godhead*, as you have heard, *dwells in him bodily*.

O what an honour hath God Almighty hereby done our nature! how highly hath he advanced and dignified it, by this ſtrange and unexpected favour, which he hath conferred on it, in making it his Holy place! Conſider but what I have now ſaid, of the Teſtimony of the HOLY GHOST

GHOST to *Jeſus*; which was an illuſtrious token likewiſe of Gods wonderful love to us. Is it nothing that God ſhould be *manifeſted* in our fleſh; that he ſhould DWELL in us, and make his *abode* with us, and that we ſhould become the *habitation of God* through the Spirit? Look upon the Temple of old, and ſee how it glittered with Gold; how it was adorned with Cherubims and Seraphims, which were an emblem of the Angelical attendance in that place; but eſpecially how it ſhined with the *Glory of the Lord*, which appeared upon the mercy-ſeat: And then reflect how precious, how dear mankind are to Almighty God, into whoſe Nature this Glory is tranſlated; whom he hath beautified with greater excellencies, and made more ſplendid by a more intimate conjunction with it. Could any man then, after he had conſidered this, profane that Nature which God hath ſo ſanctified and ſeparated to himſelf? Could he find in his heart to proſtitute himſelf to any of thoſe baſe and filthy actions; that are below the dignity of humane nature nakedly conſidered, without ſuch a preſence of God in it? None can ſubmit ſure to the government of any fleſhly luſt, but he muſt firſt forget that he is a man, created after

after the Image of God. And there is none can continue in this unworthy ſlavery, but he muſt lay aſide theſe thoughts alſo; that the WORD was made fleſh, and the Image of the inviſible God hath taken up his abode in our Nature. By this he hath called us to the greateſt ſanctity. He remembers us what excellent Creatures we are, and how Glorious he is deſirous to make us. And who is there that need deſpair of recovering himſelf by the grace of God, though he be ſunk never ſo much below himſelf; now that God is come on purpoſe to lift him up? He hath ſent Salvation to us, by one that is mighty to ſave. He hath revealed himſelf ſo graciouſly, and made ſuch diſcoveries of his Love and Power and Glory to all mankind, that they may confidently hope, if they will not caſt away all care of themſelves, to be reſtored to the image and likeneſs of God again.

But this Diſcourſe will come in more ſeaſonably, when we have joyned the ſtrength of the other *three Witneſſes* to theſe, and heard them all together, ſome from Heaven, others from Earth, proclaiming this in our ears; *Behold the Son of God: Jeſus* is your Lord; for he is the Lord

Lord of all things. And we ſhall be the more ready for a ſurrender to him, when we ſee withall, how much we are beholden to God Almighty for his marvellous, inconceiveable love, in calling us ſo many ways, by ſo many arguments, to Repentance, Faith, Obedience and Everlaſting Salvation. That which I have now explained, deſerves to be remembred with the moſt affectionate acknowledgments, and we ſhall be better diſpoſed to hearken to the reſt, if we give him hearty thanks for what we underſtand already, and ſay;

A Prayer.

ADored be thy ineſtimable love, O thou Holy Spirit of Grace and Truth, the mighty Power of God; who haſt given ſuch gifts unto men, even to the rebellious alſo; that the LORD God might DWELL among them. *Bleſſed be thy Goodneſs, who didſt anoint our Lord with that oil of gladneſs, which hath run down to the meanneſt of his ſubjects. Great and wonderful was that Heavenly Power and Love, which appeared in ſuch viſible Ma-*

jeſty upon him, and filled him with the Holy Ghoſt; ſo that he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil. *And much more marvellous was that Almighty Goodneſs, which promoted him to the throne of Glory in the Heavens,* that he might fill all things.

Praiſed be that aſtoniſhing Love, which firſt filled the Apoſtles minds with ſuch Heavenly light, and inflamed their wills with ſuch fervent heat, that they boldly preached the Goſpel to all the world. For ever magnified be that diffuſive Grace, which afterwards ſpread it ſelf in ſuch variety of gifts; wrought by one and the ſelf ſame Spirit, dividing to every man ſeverally, as he pleaſed. *Let the whole Church be giving continual thanks to thee, O Lord, for ſtretching forth thy hand in ſuch ſigns and wonders, to glorifie thy holy child* Jeſus; *for giving by the Spirit, to ſome a gift of wiſdom, to others a gift of healing, to others divers kind of tongues, to others prophecy; and for making ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtors and Teachers; that every knee might bow to* Jeſus, *and every tongue confeſs that he is the Lord.*

I confeſs him with all my Soul; I honour him

him as my Dearest Lord. I see thy Glory, O blessed Jesus, *by the light of the Holy Ghost, which hath shone so oft from Heaven upon us. I see the Power thou hast at Gods right hand. I see the royal bounty of thy love. Now I know that thou knowest all things; and believe that thou art the faithful and the true, whose words shall never fail. O how much ought I and every Christian Soul, to rejoyce in the consolations of the Holy Ghost! which hath brought us new assurances from Heaven, that our Saviour lives, and reigns, and sits inthroned at the right hand of God, in incomparable majesty and glory. Inspire all our minds and hearts, O thou quickning Spirit, inspire them, O Lord and Giver of Life, with such ardent love and devotion towards him, that we may hope to reign with him, and then shall we rejoyce before-hand in this hope, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*

Do not wholly absent thy self from us, O thou Guide and Comforter of our Souls (though we have not been so grateful to thee, nor followed thy directions and counsels as we ought) but still let thy gracious presence fill every part of the Christian Church. Though we have not that ILLUSTRATION *from above, which endued them heretofore with the gifts*

of tongues, and prophecy, and healing, and working of miracles: Yet pour down every where, much of the ſpirit of knowledge, and love, and devotion, and purity, and fortitude, and undaunted reſolution, and fervent Zeal; which may be ever glorifying the great God and our Saviour Chriſt Jeſus. *O thou who didſt open the eyes of the blind, and looſe the tongue of the dumb, enlighten our minds to ſee more of thoſe wonders, which may inflame our love, and incourage our hope; and open our lips, that our mouths may ſhew forth thy Praiſe. Still let there be hearts full of Faith in the bleſſed* Jeſus; *full of love to all mankind; full of ardent deſire to ſee his Kingdom come; full of wiſdom to open the myſteries of Salvation, to inſtruct men in the truth as it is in* Jeſus, *and to convince them mightily, and perſwade them to be obedient to it. That ſo by the ſame Heavenly power whereby the Faith of Chriſt was planted in the world, it may be graciouſly preſerved and promoted: and we may ſee it go forward and advance more and more, till every Nation now on Earth ſpeak in their own tongues the wonderful works of God.*

Let all the people praiſe thee, O God; Let all the people praiſe thee. Kindle in them ſuch devout affections, as may offer up continually

nually the ſacrifice of praiſe to thee. Let them praiſe thee with pure minds, and upright hearts, and unſpotted lives: and in perfect unity and godly love ſay every where,

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghoſt.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever ſhall be, world without end. *Amen.*

CHAP. V.

Concerning the Witneſſes *on* Earth, *and firſt of the* WATER.

HAVING given a brief account of the Teſtimony of the *firſt Three Witneſſes*, and finding much ſatisfaction in their perfect agreement; we have the greater encouragement to go to the *other Three*, who are alſo nearer to us than the former, and take that evidence which they are willing to afford us, for our further confirmation in this belief that *Jeſus is the Son of God.* Theſe three, you read in the eighth Verſe, are ſuch as bear witneſs on EARTH; whereby we may be the better acquainted with them, and they are the more undeniable, and furtheſt off from all queſtion or exception. For ſhould any be ſo bold as to diſpute that there might be no ſuch

voices from Heaven, ſuch apparitions of *Jeſus*, ſuch a deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt (as it is poſſible there may be ſuch conceited fools, who think themſelves wiſe by doubting of all things) yet that there were ſuch Witneſſes as the WATER, the BLOUD, and the SPIRIT, no man can be ſo obſtinate as to deny; they were ſo viſible to all ſorts of men whatſoever, that would but open their eyes to behold them.

In the *ſixth* verſe (of which the *eighth* is but a repetition) after the Apoſtle had ſaid, that the only Conqueror is he who believes *Jeſus* to be the Son of God; He adds, *This is he that came by WATER and BLOUD, even Jeſus Chriſt; not by Water only, but by Bloud alſo: and it is the SPIRIT that beareth witneſs*, &c. Where that phraſe [HE CAME] is to be diligently obſerved; which in the ſtile of the New Teſtament writers, ſignifies as much as that, He manifeſted himſelf to be the Meſſias or Chriſt; He made it appear that he was ſent of God. For thus the *Meſſias* is deſcribed in that queſtion which *John* Baptiſts Diſciples put to our Saviour, xi. *Matth.* 3. Art thou ὁ ἐρχόμενος, he that COMETH? that is, as *Grotius* well expounds

expounds it, he that is propheſied of by *Jacob* our Father, under the phraſe of COMING, xlix. *Gen.* 10. And ſo He is ſaid to be *the light which COMING into the World enlightneth every man*, i. *John* 9. And *John* Baptiſt tells them, *He that COMETH after me, is preferred before me*, *ver.* 15. He was preferred to be their *King*, as the multitude cried out, ſaying, *Hoſanna to the Son of David, bleſſed be he that COMETH in the Name of the Lord*, xxi. *Matth.* 9. There is the true explication of the phraſe: He was *ſent* by a ſpecial commiſſion, ſuch as never any man had from God the Father; he appeared with his authority, and acted in his *name*. And as before he appeared in his Majeſty, he was called, *He that COMETH*; ſo afterwards the Apoſtle here calls him, *He that CAME*. The perſon, that is, whom God had promiſed from the beginning of the world to *ſend* into it; His SHILO, that is, *his Seed* (as *De Dieu* hath excellently expounded that word) the Seed of *Judah*, and the Son of God. Who in this fulneſs of time was to receive Commiſſion from God, and take upon him the Government of the World.

Now this perſon, ſays S. *John*, CAME (that

(that is, appeared to be ſent of God as his *Son*, his *only begotten*) *by Water and by Blood.* Which is as much as to ſay, that it was manifeſt he *came* from God and not of himſelf by theſe two Witneſſes; to which the SPIRIT alſo adds its teſtimony, as it here follows [*and the SPIRIT bears witneſs*] which is ſuch a certain evidence, that they who rely on this, together with the former, can never be deceived by it; *becauſe the Spirit is the TRUTH.* As therefore God SENT him, ſo he CAME; and by theſe *three Witneſſes* proved that he was the Perſon, who, God promiſed, ſhould *come*, and was now *ſent*: whoſe teſtimony let us prepare our ſelves to hear, and examine diligently, that the faith of Chriſt may ſtill be rooted deeper in our hearts. And let us hear them, if you pleaſe, in that order wherein they ſtand in the *ſixth* Verſe (the place where we firſt meet with them) receiving firſt the teſtimony of the WATER, then of the BLOUD, and then of the SPIRIT.

Of the WATER.

And by WATER ſure can be meant nothing elſe but either *Purity* and innocence; or elſe *Baptiſm*, which we uſe as a ſign

ſign and a means of thoſe. We may conſider it in both ſences, and not be in any danger to wander from the ſcope of the Apoſtle, or do any wrong to the argument in hand, but receive moſt ſatisfactory evidence from both, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.*

I.

Firſt then let us take it in the notion of PURITY; which we uſe the help of *Water* to procure in bodily defilements. And therefore when the Prophet would expreſs the intention of God to purifie his people from moral filthineſs, he ſays he will *pour clean WATER upon them,* xxxvi. *Ezek.* 25. and in other places he calls upon them to *WASH themſelves*; when he would have them amend their ways, and lead new and holy lives. And when we ſpeak of the PURITY of *Jeſus,* wherewith he CAME, that is, demonſtrated himſelf to be the *Chriſt*; we muſt conſider that there is a double *Sanctity* or holineſs, for which He was eminent above all other perſons, which may both be denoted by WATER. The one is of his DOCTRINE wherewith Chriſt is ſaid to cleanſe his Church, for which he died, v. *Epheſ.* 26. *He gave himſelf*

himſelf for it, that he might ſanctifie it; having cleanſed it with the Waſhing of WATER *by the Word.* Where *the Word* (the preaching of the Goſpel) is either the explanation of *waſhing with Water*, or elſe denotes that Chriſtian Inſtruction which ſucceeds Baptiſm; to which, by our being *waſhed with Water* in the Name of Chriſt, we are bound to attend, as the great inſtrument of our purification. The other is holineſs of LIFE *and converſation*; which the ſame word WATER is uſed to expreſs in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, x. 22. where the Apoſtle exhorts all thoſe who believed there was ſuch a royal High Prieſt as *Jeſus*, ſet over the family of God, to worſhip him with integrity of heart and ſincere affection to him; nothing doubting of the truth of his promiſes, and *having their hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and their bodies waſhed with pure* WATER. Now by a ſhort view of the perfect ſpotleſneſs of *Jeſus* in both theſe, in regard of his *Doctrine*, and in regard of his *Life*; we ſhall be able from thence ſtrongly to draw this concluſion, that he muſt needs be the *Son of God.*

I. Firſt for the PURITY of his DOCTRINE; it is ſuch, that it not only

only teaches no evil at all, but teaches all manner of Goodneſs; and ſeverely prohibits every vice. There is not the leaſt ſin to which the Holy *Jeſus* gives any countenance; no, he declares *the wrath of God from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men*; whom he fully inſtructs likewiſe and encourages in every piece of true piety and vertue. So perfectly Holy is his *Word*, that if we did entertain it, the power of it would throughly waſh us from all uncleanneſs, and not leave the leaſt ſpeck of dirt in our hearts. For he intends by *that* (as the Apoſtle tells the *Epheſians* in the words following thoſe now named, *ver.* 27.) *to preſent to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh.* Whatſoever belongs either to our *knowledge* of God, or to our *Duty* in every reſpect, condition and relation, His Doctrine completely comprehends it.

He hath *firſt* of all ſo clearly revealed to us the ONE GOD Creator of Heaven and Earth, that none could do it more expreſly, or with greater reverence to his Majeſty. Whatſoever *Moſes* hath written againſt Idolatry, S. *John* here from

Jeſus

Jesus (in the conclusion of his Epistle) hath summed it up in a few words, *Little children, keep your selves from* IDOLS. In this the *Jews* could not accuse him, nor durst let such a word fall from their mouths, that he was a false Prophet, because he endeavoured to draw their hearts after other Gods (which was the great mark of an Impostor, xiii. *Deut.*) No, he tells them that *this is Eternal Life, to know the only true God* (which words are spoken in opposition to all others) *and Jesus Christ whom he had sent.* But in this they might have seen that his design was far more noble and glorious than that of *Moses*, who contented himself to preserve that one Nation from the infection of Idolatry: whereas our Lord *Jesus* plainly declared his intention was by his Apostles *to turn* all Nations *from Idols, to serve the living and true God.* There was never any man that appeared so great a lover of God as he was. Never any man that undertook to set on foot such a design, for the advancement of the universal knowledge of him. All the Divine Attributes and Perfections also, He hath revealed so perspicuously, that there never was such a manifestation made of them to the World, as we see in Him. From whom we learn how Just,

how

how Good, how Wise, how Faithful, and how Powerful, *the Blessed and only Potentate is, who only hath immortality, whom no man hath seen or can see.*

And if we would know our *Duty*, either towards God in actions of *Piety*, or towards Men in actions of *Righteousness*, or towards our selves in actions of *sobriety*, we can learn it no where so easily, and completely, as if we go to him, and to those who have delivered it to us with great care and plainness from his mouth.

As for the Actions of PIETY, He teaches us *inwardly* to *Honour God*, v. *Joh.* 23. that is, to have an high esteem of him as our Lord, and as our chiefest Good: to *Love* him also, and that with all our heart, and all our Soul, and all our mind, and all our strength, xii. *Mark* 30. And to *Fear* him, seeing he can cast both Body and Soul into Hell; which makes him again and again bid us be sure to *Fear him*, xii. *Luke* 4, 5. To confide likewise and *Trust* in him, the living God, 1 *Tim.* iv. 10. To *Hope* in his mercy, 1 *Pet.* i. 21. And to *rejoyce* evermore, 1 *Thess.* v. 16.

And as we are thus to worship him in our

our Minds, so we are taught by his Religion *externally* to *adore* him and *fall down* before him, iv. *Matth.* 10. iv. *Rev.* 10. to *pray* to him both for our selves and others, 1 *Tim.* ii. 1, 8. and to be *incessant* in our Prayers (or to perform this holy duty very oft) xviii. *Luke* 1. 1 *Thess.* v. 17. and *to offer up by him the sacrifice of Praise to God continually*, xiii. *Heb.* 15. *And in every thing to give thanks, which is the will of God concerning us in Christ Jesus*, 1 *Thess.* v. 18. and especially *to shew the Lords death*, that is, publish it with thanks and praise, *till he come*, to judge the World, 1 *Cor.* xi. 26.

The manner also of addressing our selves to God he hath taught us so fully, that nothing can be added to it. For he tells us, *The Father will be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth*, iv. *John* 23. And that we must *lift up holy hands*, 1 *Tim.* ii. 8. And that when we pray we must *forgive others*, xi. *Mark* 25. and *ask in Faith*, xxi. *Matth.* 22. and avoid *vain babling*; and not affect *much speaking*, nor desire *to be seen of men*, and to joyn *Fasting* and *Alms*, with our Prayers and Devotions to God, *Matth.* vi. It is impossible to conceive any thing more Divine than these Instructions.

To

To which he adds as rare Precepts for Actions of RIGHTEOUSNESS: concerning which he hath given us such an absolutely perfect Rule, that it comprehends the measures of CHARITY too. No wit of man can think of any thing more holy than that, LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THY SELF; or that, WHATSOEVER YE WOULD THAT MEN SHOULD DO TO YOU, DO YE EVEN SO TO THEM. This is a rule that reaches all men; and compendiously, yet completely, tells them how they should behave themselves towards each other. If a man were a Magistrate, or a Parent, or stood in any other superiority over his Neighbours, he would desire honour and obedience from them; that therefore, says our Saviour, let him give to those who are in Authority. If a man be our equal, we desire, if not his friendship, yet his fidelity in word and deed; that very thing let us be sure to render him and all others in the same equality with us. If we be placed below others, we desire the favour, the help, the relief, and counsel of our Betters; all these *Jesus* here teaches us to afford, with the same chearfulness that we would expect them in their case, to those who are

in want of our kind assistance.

Nay, he hath told us in *particular* what our duty is in these matters, by the mouths of his holy Apostles; that no man may think to excuse himself by his ignorance and inability to apply a *general* Rule to every action of his life. I shall not name all the places where you may find such words as these that follow, but only tell you, He would have us so far from doing evil to any man, that he requires us *owe him nothing, but only love.* And this debt we must be *always* paying, and think our selves debtors to *all men*; not only to treat them civilly, and give them good words, but *to love them in deed and in truth.* Which Love must teach us as to be *meek and gentle* towards all men; *to put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking*; not to circumvent or *go beyond our Brother in any matter*; not *to lye to our neighbour*; nor *defame* him; much less *do him any hurt* in his body or goods: So to relieve his poverty; to help forward his joy; to comfort him in his sorrow; to cover his defects; to make a fair interpretation of his actions; to let *our judgment* of him incline to the more favourable side; to mind what is *lovely* or grateful to others,

and

and what things are of *good report*; to study things that *make for peace*; to compose and *reconcile* differences; to *beg pardon* of those whom we have offended, and make them satisfaction; and if any have offended us, readily *to forgive* their fault; to *forbear revenge* when it is in our power to requite an injury; to *do good for evil*; to *bless those that curse us*; to overcome mens *hatred* with *benefits*; to *pray to God for those who use us despitefully*; and to be *long-suffering*, when it is fit to punish any man for his crime. And as for those who are truly pious, we are taught *to do them good above all other men*; to live with them *in unity* and godly love; to *sympathize* with them in their several conditions; *rejoycing with those that do rejoyce, and weeping with those that weep.*

Nor hath he failed to tell us by his holy Apostles, with what kindness and indulgent affection *Husbands* should treat their *Wives*; and how they again should so affectionately observe their Husbands, that they may together make up a lively Image of that Dearest Love, which is between Christ and his Church. And he hath instructed us all how to behave our selves towards *Magistrates, Bishops, Presbyters,*

Masters and *Parents*; whom he hath also taught how to bring up their *children*, to use their *servants*, to feed and govern their *flocks*, and to rule their *people* committed to their charge: so that no man can say he goes without that Lesson, which is proper for his condition.

And then if we proceed to those things which we call SOBRIETY, his Doctrine is so holy and pure, that it requires the greatest Moderation in all things. It favours nothing that relishes of Covetousness, or Ambition, or Voluptuousness, or any other violent and inordinate passion whatsoever. But quite contrary, commands us *not to labour*, with too much eagerness and solicitude, *for the meat that perishes*; to *lay up our treasures in Heaven*; to be *humble and lowly*, like little children; to be *temperate in all things*; to be watchful and vigilant, lest we be *overtaken with surfeiting and drunkenness or the cares of this life*; to be *chaste and pure in heart*; to *mortifie our members that are on the Earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, and evil concupiscence*; to abstain from *lasciviousness, foolish talking, wanton and unseemly jesting*; to *cut off our right hand* and *pluck out our right eye*, if it prove an offence

to

to us; to take just measures of our selves, as well as others; to be *content* with our portion; to do those things which are *venerable*, grave and beseeming our condition and employment: which if it be not according to our desires, not to repine or be dejected at it; if it be, not to be transported with vain joy, much less with pride and contempt of our neighbours.

And after all these and such like incomparable Lessons, He teaches us to *suffer* any thing for well doing; to bear all worldly troubles valiantly and with a magnanimous heart; to despise reproaches; nay, to rejoyce when our names are cast out as evil, *for his name sake*; in *patience to possess our Souls*; and *not to be weary* in *well doing*, nor *faint in our minds*; but *to endure chastening*; to persevere and *suffer with long patience*; to *stand fast in the faith*; to *quit our selves like men*, and *to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

To all which duties he urges us likewise, by the purest, the most spiritual, the noblest and most Divine Arguments. He does not press us with such low and poor motives as the hope of Riches (though he promise us things convenient)

or of Greatneſs, or of Fame and Glory; either while we live or when we are dead: but propounds his own example to us, and the example of all the Saints that are gone before us; and quickens us with the hope of Immortality when we depart this life; and aſſures us at preſent of the friendly protection of Angels, and of the joys of the Holy Ghoſt: which none of thoſe ſhall fail to receive, who are not inticed nor affrighted from their duty; but reſolutely hold out in their Chriſtian warfare, and overcome.

And if any man ſay, that ſeveral Philoſophers taught excellent things, and gave Rules of a vertuous life; and yet it does not prove the beſt of them to be ſo great, as theſe *Witneſſes* are brought to demonſtrate our Saviour was: The Anſwer is, that none of them delivered ſuch a complete Rule of holy living as our Lord hath done; none of them touched the heart with ſuch powerful reaſons and Divine motives; nor did any of them write without ſome mixture of folly; or themſelves exactly perform that which they taught others. Beſides, that none of them ever had the confidence to pretend to that quality, wherein our Saviour *came*; which

you

you shall see presently is of great force to prove such an Holy Person as he was, to be indeed what he pretended; *the Son of God.*

II. But first let us a little consider the *second* sort of PURITY, that of the *Life*; in which our Lord *Jesus* far out-stript all others. He did not only preach after that manner I have now related; but so he lived, and became a complete pattern of that which he taught. He was a LIVING LAW, as *Lactantius* calls him*, to all his Disciples; whom he taught by Himself, and not merely by his Lectures of Piety. Other Teachers had conceived in their minds and painted in their Orations a vertue that was no where to be seen; for they were not able (as the same Author else-where speaks) to confirm by present Examples, that which they asserted in their Doctrine. Their Auditors might still say, that no body could live according to their prescriptions, because no body ever did. Behold, therefore our Saviour comes *to do*, and not only to preach, *the will of God.* And so holy, pure and free from all blame were all the *Actions* of his life; that his greatest Enemies could lay nothing to his charge, but

* *Lib. 4. Instit. C. 25*

only certain *words*: and thoſe, ſuch as contained moſt perfect truth, as he proved by his actions and many other ways.

He was the Lamb of God *without ſpot, and without blemiſh,* as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, 1 *Pet.* i. 19. He offered himſelf by the eternal Spirit *without ſpot* unto God, ix. *Hebr.* 14. His whole life was ſuch a fair example of that Piety, Humility, Charity, Gentleneſs, Forgiveneſs, Peaceableneſs, Patience, and all other vertues which he taught; that God reſtored him to life again, after they had crucified him and put him to death, becauſe there was no fault in him. He was frequent in Prayer to God; and ſometimes continued therein a whole night together. Upon all occaſions he gave him thanks. He loved his Glory and the Good of mankind, more than his life. He went about doing good. And he taught his Family to be as kind and tender-hearted as himſelf. He was meek and lowly in heart. When he was abuſed, He was dumb as a Lamb before the ſhearers, ſo opened he not his mouth. He was full of reſpect towards Magiſtrates and Governours; very ſweet and affable towards the pooreſt people; exceeding kind and compaſſionate towards his envenomed

venomed enemies; and perfectly contented in the lowest condition. When Foxes had holes, and Birds had nests, but He not where to lay his head; none could be found more chearful, thankful, and well pleased than he was. And as for his Fortitude, Courage, Constancy, Resignation, and all other suffering vertues; there never was any thing comparable to them. For he endured the Cross, and despised the shame, and contentedly took the contradiction of sinners, saying, *Father, not my will, but thy will be done.*

To all which you must add, that he was thus pure and undefiled, thus perfectly pious, just and good, in an Age that was levened with the doctrine of the *Pharisees*; who by their Traditions had made void the Law of God. Then he was complete in all manner of God-like qualities; when the strictest Sect of Religious people were utterly void even of common honesty. In those days he did all things that *God* required; when it was counted the greatest sanctity to do little but what *men* prescribed. When vertue was despised, when Faith and Judgment and the Love of God were hated, when there was nothing but the very dregs of *Abrahams* Piety remaining

ing among his Children; then *Jeſus* teſtified to them that their deeds were evil; then this light ſhined in that darkneſs; and this Son of God entred upon a more than *Herculean* labour, of cleanſing the Temple and the People, that were fuller of filth than the *Augæan* Stable.

And it is moreover to be conſidered, that though he oppoſed thoſe idle traditions of theirs, which evacuated the Laws of God; yet he neglected none of the Ceremonial ordinances of *Moſes*, but therein fulfilled all righteouſneſs. No body could accuſe him for the breach of any Commandment, that had a Divine ſtamp upon it. When they quarrelled with him for healing on the Sabbath day; He ſoon ſtopt their mouths by ſhowing them that they themſelves would not deny ſuch a charity to an Oxe or an Aſſe upon that day; if it were in danger of periſhing, or ſtood in need to be led away to watering. Nor was this ſo great a labour in him, as it was for them to pull a beaſt out of a pit; for he did but ſpeak a word, and the cure was done, without any further pains. They did but diſcover therefore, in theſe exceptions, their own rancorous malice and baſe hypocriſie; who ſcrupled ſuch chari-

charitable actions as these on the Sabbath day, but made no bones, as we say, at any time to undo even a poor widow; whose house their Conscience was wide enough to swallow. By his sharp but necessary reproof of such crimes, he incurred their hatred. Which could not dishearten him in his duty; but still he continued his free admonitions and reprehensions, though he knew it might cost him the loss of his life. The doing of Gods will was a great deal dearer to him than that. For this end he came into the world, as he told *Pilate*, that he might bear witness to the Truth. And therefore it was his meat, his great delight, to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work.

To conclude this; so free from all spot was the Holy *Jesus*, that the Devils malice could not tell what fault to charge upon him. But, as *Eusebius* * recites from the Heathen Oracles, was forced to acknowledge him to be ὐσεβές-ατον καὶ ἀθάνατον (and as he says a little after) ὐρανίων ἀϊδίων οἰκήτορα. That is, *a most Religious person, and made immortal after death; an inhabitant of the celestial Orbs.* *Porphyry* himself, a great factor for the old *Paganish* worship,

* *Lib. 3. demonstr. Evang.*

worship, but one that had tasted of Christianity, and knew what was in it, durst not (as he there notes) say any thing to his disparagement: but from his own beloved Oracles, though he regarded not the holy Scriptures, was constrained to give the forementioned testimony of him. All that he was able to say in detraction from his honour, was this, that Christians did foolishly to worship him: Though he granted him to be carried to Heaven, ὥσπερ οἱ εὐσεβεῖς, as Pious men are wont to be; and therefore advises his own Scholars not to blaspheme (*i. e.* speak evil of) *Jesus*, but only to pity the ignorance of his *followers*.

It was very cautiously spoken, and moved no doubt the pity of Christian people towards one that thought himself so knowing. For whatsoever he unskilfully determined, we are able to make it appear, that we do well to worship and honour him, even as we honour the Father of all: since his life is confessed by his Enemies to be perfectly pure and unspotted; and his Doctrine teaches men nothing, but to do as he did. This conclusion we shall easily draw from the premises, if they be but diligently considered. And

1. First

1. First of all, it seems to me incredible, that any one but he that was in the very bosom of God (that is, knew his mind most intimately, as I have said before;) should be able to declare his will so fully, and to give such a Divine Rule of holiness as *Jesus* hath done, even by the mouth of those who were skilled in nothing, but how to mend a Net, or catch Fish, or some such poor artifice, till he inspired them. All the words that he spake himself, both for the matter and manner of them, do not sound like the words of a Man, but of a God. *Never man spake like this man,* say they, that did not go to be instructed by him, but to apprehend him, vii. *John* 46. The report of others did not make him so great, as they found him, when they came to see and hear him themselves. Bad men are commonly more odious to us when we enter into conversation with them, than they were whilest we remained strangers, and had nothing to do with them. Nay, persons of known worth are sometimes more magnified by fame, than they appear when we approach nearer them. But *Jesus* was every where admired and glorified; and never more, than when men grew the most familiar

with

with him. None could despise, though they might hate him, unless it was when he thought good to say nothing, and to work no miracles; which made *Herod* and his men of war set him at naught. When he opened his mouth, they that did not believe on him, wondred, as you have heard, at the gracious words which thence proceeded.

For beside that his Discourses were incomparably beyond the common pitch of wise men, his delivery of them was altogether Divine; for he spake *with authority*, and was *a Prophet*, as the Disciples going to *Emaus* relate to himself, *Mighty in deed and word before God, and all the people*, xxiv. 19. And such were those poor ignorant men, whom he chose to be his Apostles. Who not only convinced gain-sayers with the strength of Divine Arguments, but also delivered Instructions for good Manners, with such exactness and such plainness of speech; so familiarly, and so agreeably to the noblest inclinations of humane nature: that it is manifest they understood it better than the greatest Philosopher of them all. None of them ever described the several duties of mankind, and urged them with such

proper

proper arguments, in ſo few words, and yet ſo clearly and fully as theſe illiterate men did. Nor was there ever a ſet of men ſo *affectionately deſirous* of the good of others as theſe men were: who were *willing to impart unto them not only the Goſpel of God, but their own Souls alſo; becauſe they were dear unto them.* So S. *Paul* writes to the *Theſſalonians* (1 ii. 8.) every one of whom he *exhorted, and comforted, and charged, as a Father doth his children, ver.* 11. But he never uſed any *flattering words* towards them; nor *ſpake as pleaſing men, but God, who trieth the hearts*; nor carried on any deſign of *covetouſneſs*, or winning of *glory* to himſelf; nor would be, in the leaſt, *burdenſom* to them; but *was gentle among them, even as a nurſe cheriſheth her own children, ver.* 4, 5, 6, 7.

Show me the man that ever ſpoke with ſuch wiſdom and judgment, as they did; and with ſo much tenderneſs of heart. None but their Maſter ever preached or wrote with ſo Divine a Spirit: which *John* the Baptiſt deſcribes in ſuch words (with which I ſhall content my ſelf) as prove the excellence of his Perſon, from the excellence of his Doctrine, which he delivered unto men. They are in the

iii. *Joh.*

iii. *John* 31. where he ſays, *He that COMETH from above, is above all: He that is of the Earth, is Earthly, and ſpeaketh of the Earth: He that COMETH from Heaven, is above all.* That is, He who appears from Heaven with ſuch a Divine Authority, who delivers the mind of God in ſo rare a manner, that one may ſee he hath been with God, muſt needs excel all other perſons in dignity; *Moſes* and the Prophets, and me alſo, who am of an Earthly extraction, born like other men; and can ſpeak only like a man, poor and low things in compariſon with thoſe, which that Heavenly teacher delivers: who, I muſt needs again confeſs, is far ſuperiour to me, becauſe he is not a mere man, but comes from Heaven; and ſo is above all Prophets whatſoever, who had more of the Earth than of Heaven in them; that is, knew none of thoſe ſecret counſels of God concerning mans everlaſting bliſs, nor could direct us in ſo ſhort, but plain and ſure a way to it as he hath done. And then it follows, *ver.* 32, 33. *And what he hath ſeen and heard, that he teſtifieth,* &c. *He that hath received his teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal that God is true. For he whom God hath ſent, ſpeaketh the words of God.* That is, he ſpeaks ſuch things, that

a man may easily see he is the only begotten of the Father, who is in his bosom, and knows his very mind; having as certain an understanding of Heavenly things, as we have of what we *see* and *hear*. And therefore whosoever believes him, does no more but assent to God; whose words he speaks, by a particular commission he received from him to act in his Name.

It is very observable that just after the mention of these Witnesses, 1 *John* v. 10. S. *John* adds, that *He who believes not this record which God gives of his Son, hath made him a liar*: as on the other side *John* the Baptist here says, That *he who doth receive his testimony* (i. e. believes) *solemnly acknowledges God to be true*. From whence I conclude, that what is said in this Epistle hath a relation to that which is writ in the Gospel: which I take to be no more than this. That the Divineness of *Jesus* his Doctrine; the purity and Heavenly strain of his discourses; his preaching as if he had *heard and seen* the Father, and knew the state of things above; his speaking the Words of God (not as *anothers*, like the Prophets before him, but as his *own*) was a great testimony to him that he was sent of God, in that quality

that he pretended: So that they who received him did but rely upon the Truth of God, and give up their faith to him; who hereby, as well as other ways, perſwaded them that this was his Son.

2. But then that which I mainly inſiſt upon is this *ſecond* conſideration. That his pure, moſt holy *Doctrine* and *Life* was a great argument of his Divinity; becauſe this was part of his Doctrine, that he was the *Son of God.* For who can think that a perſon of his vertue, who taught men both by word and deed ſuch reverence to God and ſuch juſtice and charity to men, could be guilty of putting ſuch an open affront upon the one, and ſuch an abuſe upon the other, as to challenge this title and propound himſelf to be received in this quality, if he had not a juſt and undoubted right to it? He that came with ſo much ſanctity and holineſs, in all his other words, and all his other actions, one cannot but conclude was as holy and free from ſin in this as much as in any thing elſe; that he ſaid he was the *Chriſt*, and perſwaded the people to believe he was the *Son of the bleſſed.*

This is certain, He affirmed himſelf to be

be the Christ, the Son of God, *first* to his Disciples: And that both before his sufferings, xvi. *Matth.* 16, 17. ix. *Mark* 41. and also after his resurrection, xxiv. *Luke* 46. And then to others also, who were as yet none of them, as (1.) to the woman of *Samaria*, iv. *John* 26. Then (2.) to the blind man whose eyes he opened, ix. *John* 35, 36, 37. And *lastly*, he asserted it when he was brought before his Judges (as you have heard already) and this very matter was brought in question; yea, when they adjured him by the true God, and as he bare any respect to him, to tell them the very truth in this thing. Now who is there that would not infer from hence, that all the rest of his Doctrine being so opposite to all lying and every other vice, and his whole life giving such a proof of his perfect vertue, that they had nothing to ground a charge upon against him, but merely this profession of his own, wherein, if he had pleased, he might have been silent; it is not in the least credible that a person of his integrity should after so long speaking truth, now at the last be guilty of speaking a lye? And (2.) a lye of such a dangerous consequence as this, by which, if it were one, he and a world of Souls must be undone? Yea,

(3.) that he ſhould tell it ſo often to ſo many perſons? And that (4.) before the Magiſtrates, who are Gods in this world? And that (5.) when they were deſirous and very importunate to know the truth? Yea, (6.) before God himſelf, by whoſe name he was ſolemnly adjured to ſpeak nothing but the truth? How is it poſſible that ſuch a man as he ſhould be ſo void of all fear of God, as to offend him in ſo high a manner? There are none ſure whoſe unſtandings are ſound, or whoſe conſciences are not crackt, who can ſo much as fancy, much leſs perſwade themſelves to believe, that a perſon whoſe innocence was ſo great, that all the falſe witneſſes they could find, men who cared not for their own lives, could not be maſters of his; ſhould now, in ſuch a ſerious manner, when he was going out of the world, put ſuch an horrid cheat upon it, and with the loſs of his life too upon a ſhameful gibbet, as to ſay that he came from God, if he had no warrant for it. All ſober men muſt rather confidently believe that He who arrived, as I have often ſaid, at ſuch an height of blameleſs purity in all other points whatſoever, was as free from blame in this alſo; and ſaid nothing but the very Truth, when He ſo ſolemnly and

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ſo frequently, before God and before men, in his life-time and at his death, profeſſed that he was *the Son of God.*

And if any man ſtill object, that his uprightneſs indeed was ſo great that without all doubt he would not invent ſuch a tale as this, and affirm what he did not believe; but yet he might be miſtaken and believe that which was not true: He may anſwer himſelf from his own conceſſions. For if he conſider how free our Saviour was from all ambitious deſires, how modeſtly he refuſed to be advanced, how void he was of covetouſneſs and all other worldly appetites, which may blind a mans reaſon and abuſe his underſtanding; and likewiſe how admirably he diſcourſes, how rational and convincing, how ſublime and heavenly all his Sermons are; He will ſoon be ſatisfied, that it is not credible a perſon of his wiſdom ſhould be ruled by mere fancy; or of his goodneſs, be carried into a vain dream by any ſenſual affections, which had no place in him.

This is the firſt acception of the word WATER, which you ſee clears our Lord from all imputation of fraud, and waſhes off all aſperſions that might be caſt upon

him of impoſture. For there is not the leaſt ſpot or blemiſh appears in the whole courſe of his *Life*, to render him ſuſpected of any guile, much leſs of ſo great a deceit as this, to feign himſelf the Son of God. Nay, his *Doctrine* is ſo Divine, ſo much beyond the ſtrain of the wiſeſt men that ever ſpake, that it demonſtrates he was as little obnoxious to be deluded himſelf, as he was inclined and diſpoſed to delude others.

II.

Let us now proceed to ſee what teſtimony may be drawn from this WATER in behalf of our Lord; if we take it in the other ſence, for BAPTISM, in which we make a profeſſion of PURITY. And there is a twofold BAPTISM by which our Lord may be ſaid to COME; that is, to appear a Perſon ſent of God, as his only begotten Son: The firſt is *the Baptiſm of John*; the ſecond is his *own* Baptiſm.

I. As for the *Baptiſm of John*, it may be ſaid that our Saviour CAME *by* or *with* this WATER; both becauſe *John* when he baptized men with Water, preached that He was *coming*, iii. *Matth.* 11.

i. *John*

i. *John* 30. and becauſe He brought this Baptiſm along with him, or rather ſent it a little before him, as a teſtimony of him, which would *prepare his way*, and diſpoſe their hearts to receive him as the *Chriſt of God*. For it is manifeſt that it was intended as a proof of this, from thoſe words of our Saviour himſelf, by which he ſtopt the mouths of the *Phariſees*, and took away all matter of cavil from them, when he aſſerted his ſupreme Authority both over them and over their Temple, xxi. *Matth.* 23, 24, 25, 26. There you read that our Saviour having come in Triumph to *Jeruſalem* (*ver.* 8, 9.) and there received *Hoſanna*'s from old and young, and been ſaluted as *the Son of David*, that is, their KING (who the Prophet had ſaid, *ver.* 5. ſhould *come* unto them, *meek and ſitting upon the Foal of an Aſſe*,) and he having caſt the buyers and ſellers out of the Temple (*ver.* 12.) and prohibited them to carry ſo much as a veſſel through it (as S. *Mark* tells us, xi. 16.) and being now teaching the people there, the Chief Prieſts and the Elders came to him, and examined him *by what Authority* he did theſe things, and *who gave* him this Authority. That is, they bid him produce his Commiſſion, if he had any, and ſhow

them from whom he was SENT and CAME to take this Office, not only of a Teacher, but of a Reformer, and that of the Temple it ſelf: and likewiſe who warranted him to ride in ſuch pomp to *Jeruſalem*, as the *Son of David*, the Lord of that Country.

The Anſwer of our Saviour to this queſtion is, that they might ſoon be reſolved, if they would but ſatisfie him in another queſtion, concerning another perſon, who was *come* alſo in an unuſual manner among them: And that was, whether *John* had a Commiſſion from God to baptize, or came of himſelf, by the allowance of men only. Anſwer me but this queſtion, ſays he, and I will tell you by what authority I do theſe things. Conſider of it, and tell me what you think; *whence was John's Baptiſm? from Heaven, or of Men?* That is, who gave him his power to preach, to reprove, to call men to repentance, to receive confeſſion of ſins, and to do all other things belonging to his Miniſtry, which Baptiſm accompanied, and conſtantly waited upon? Did God bid him go? or was it from a motion of his own?

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While they consulted for an Answer to this question of our Saviours, they clearly saw their *own* answered. And they were not so dull, but that they could easily discern our Lord would irrefragably prove his Divine Authority, and make them confess he was the *Messias*; unless they would adventure to say that, which all the Country would decry not only as a falsity, but an egregious calumny. For if they had affirmed that *John* entred upon the Office of Baptizing and Teaching the people out of his own private will and inclination, or by commission from some men; in this opinion they knew they should be singular, because *all the people held him to be a Prophet*. That is, it was the sence of the whole Nation then (and so it was afterward, as appears by *Josephus*) that the Baptist was a Divine Man, inspired by God, and sent of him to do what he did: which would have made them the publick scorn and hatred, if without a reason able to confute all the Country, they should have denied it. But then if they should grant this and say, He was sent of God (which was the only thing they could say with safety, if they would affirm either) they saw themselves in as

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ill or worſe a caſe another way: being as much afraid of what *Jeſus* would ſay, if this were confeſſed, as they were of what the people would ſay, if it were contradicted. For as the people would have cried ſhame on them, if they had diſparaged *John*'s miniſtry, ſo if they allowed it to be from Heaven, then they knew *Jeſus* would unanſwerably prove his Commiſſion to be from Heaven too: and tell them that *John*, whom they took for a Divine Man, ſhould acquaint them with his authority, and from whom he had it; for he bare witneſs, in expreſs words, that he was the Chriſt, the Son of God. They thought it a ſafer courſe therefore to leave this queſtion undetermined, and to ſay *they could not tell* whence his Baptiſm was, than by reſolving it either way, to give with their own mouths ſo great an advantage to him, whom they queſtioned and oppoſed.

But by ſaying nothing, they plainly confeſſed, that if they had gone on to diſpute with him, He would have had the better of them: and have made it appear from *John* Baptiſts teſtimony, that He had an authority far greater than that which they muſt have acknowledged in him.

him. For though our Saviour thought good, for brevity-ſake, to propound this argument to them by way of queſtion, and ſo let them reaſon it out within themſelves; yet it was as forcible, they plainly felt, as if he had pleaded with them in this manner. My Authority, which you call in queſtion, is every evident. I have it from Heaven, and not from Men; as I prove by this argument. If the Baptiſm of *John* be from Heaven, then from thence I come; now you cannot deny, if you will ſpeak out, that his Baptiſm is from thence; and therefore I make the concluſion, that my Authority is Divine. The conſequence was as clear as the Sun, that if *John* was ſent by God, then ſo was *Jeſus* in that quality wherein he appeared; becauſe *John* (as you ſhall ſee) gave this teſtimony to him, which could not be queſtioned after they had granted him to be a Prophet. The only thing that could be denied in this Argument was, that *John*'s Baptiſm was from Heaven; or that God authorized him to ſay and do what he did. But this they durſt not oppoſe, becauſe then to rid themſelves of one Enemy, they ſhould bring the whole Nation, as we ſay, about their ears: who did not take *John* for a counterfeit, but thought,

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that he was a Prophet INDEED, xi. *Mark* 32. Nay, they themselves never adventured to call *John* before their Council; much less advised how they might put him to death, as they did our Saviour. But on the contrary, *many of the Pharisees and the Sadducees came to his Baptism*, iii. *Matth.* 7. They were as inclinable to reverence him as the people. For God who had spoken heretofore to that Nation so long by *Prophets*, whom they thought themselves bound to believe, had plainly manifested him to be one. Nay, he was not a common Prophet, but one of an extraordinary rank: *The Prophet of the Highest*, his Father calls him; and *more than a Prophet* in the language of our Saviour, as you shall hear presently.

What should they do then? which way should they turn themselves, now that they durst not deny the Proposition, upon which this consequence evidently depended, that *Jesus* was the *Christ?* Their only refuge was silence: For though thereby they acknowledged him too hard for them, and suffered his Divine authority to stand supported by this unanswered Argument; yet they had rather part so, and shamefully break off the disputation which they themselves

themſelves had begun, than let him go away with their expreſs confeſſion and teſtimony, that, if the Prophet of the Higheſt might be believed, he was *their Chriſt*. It was no diſadvantage to our Saviour, but to their own cauſe, that they anſwered, *they could not tell* whence *John*'s Baptiſm was: For hereby it appeared He had ſo much to ſay for himſelf, that if they would ſay any thing in this matter, and not obſtinately hold their peace, they muſt ſay as He did, that He was the *Son of God*. For *John* Baptiſt, whoſe Heavenly authority they durſt not deny, though they would not confeſs it, received all men into this belief when they came to him, that there was one COMING *after him*, who ſhould gather Diſciples as he did, and that he was *the Chriſt*. This he told them was the very end of his Preaching and Baptizing, *to prepare the way of the Lord*; to make them fit and ready to entertain the next Prophet that ſhould appear, as greater than him, even as *the Son of God*. And therefore when *Jeſus* did openly appear and come to his Baptiſm, and *John* ſaw the Spirit deſcend and remain on *him*, then he told them in plain terms that *this* was the perſon whoſe way he came to prepare, and that they muſt receive

ceive *him* as the *Son of God,* and *the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world,* i. *John* 29, 30, 34. And that which he ſaid at this time, there is no doubt he declared at all times, when the people came to be baptized. For thus the *Jews* deſcribe *Jeſus* when they diſputed with ſome of *John*'s Scholars about his Baptiſm, iii. *Joh.* 25. HE TO WHOM THOU BAREST WITNESS, *behold, the ſame baptizeth,* &c. *ver.* 26. Thence he is frequently called one of his WITNESSES, and ſaid to come for this end, that he might be a WITNESS to him, *that ALL men through him might believe*; that is, might be perſwaded that *Jeſus* was the *WORD of God,* by this teſtimony of *John,* i. *John* 6, 7, 8. And our Saviour afterwards appeals to this Teſtimony of his, and bids the *Jews* conſider it, v. *John* 32, 33. For you know, ſays he, that he bare WITNESS to me, when ye ſent to him: *And I know that the WITNESS which he WITNESSETH of me is true.*

And great reaſon there was that they ſhould conſider it, and be convinced by it. For *John was a burning and a ſhining light* (as it there follows, *ver.* 35.) and they *themſelves were willing for a ſeaſon to rejoyce*

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in his light. If that fit was over, and now they were leſs delighted in him, it was merely becauſe he teſtified of *Jeſus*. There was nothing elſe to damp their affection; for otherways they could not but confeſs him to be an illuſtrious perſon. Who ſhined with the greater ſplendour, becauſe He was miraculouſly conceived in his Mothers old Age; and his Birth was predicted by an Angel; and his Father ſtruck dumb becauſe he believed not his Word; and this Angel appeared in the very Temple, at the Altar of Incenſe, and therefore was not like to be a deluſion; And his Father was indued with the Spirit of Prophecy, and his tongue unlooſed when this Child came to be Circumciſed; Then He ſpake concerning his quality, by the inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt; and *John* appeared to be prophetically endowed from a child; God alſo took care of his education in the Wilderneſs, where he was trained up to a reſemblance of *Elias*; ſo that his life and manners tranſcended all in that Age; and his Spirit and Doctrine was ſo powerful and convincing, that it was hard for them to ſay who he was; the people admiring his ſanctity and preaching, held him for a Prophet; and ſome of the Prieſts and Levites

Levites having ſuch an eſteem of him, that it was a queſtion among them, whether he was not the CHRIST.

They were ſent, you know, from *Jeruſalem* to enquire about it, i. *John* 19, 20, &c. and yet this Perſon, who ſhined with ſuch a luſtre, whom *Jeſus* himſelf calls the greateſt that had been born of women, of whom he was baptized; declares to theſe perſons who came to ask who he was, that he was not worthy ſo much as to carry the Shooes of him that was *coming* after him, *ver.* 27. and that his Doctrine, as you have heard (iii. 31.) was of *the Earth*, flat and low in compariſon with the words that *Jeſus* ſhould ſpeak; who he told them plainly was the Chriſt, the Son of God: but as for himſelf, *he confeſſed, and denied not; but confeſſed* (that is, repeated it more than once, and affirmed conſtantly) *I am not the Chriſt.*

What reaſon was there then, why both they that heard his teſtimony of *Jeſus*, and they that ſent theſe meſſengers to make enquiry, ſhould not believe him, ſince all this was ſo known a truth? His Father *Zacharias* was a Prieſt, whom they could not

not but reverence more than to imagine he ſtudied to deceive, eſpecially ſince he was noted for a righteous man, *walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs.* And *John* himſelf was a *Nazarite*, one whoſe head was never troubled with the fumes of Wine or of ſtrong drink: (i. *Luke* 15.) and bred up likewiſe in the *Deſarts* or Wilderneſs of *Judea* (i. *Luke* 80.) after a plain and ſimple faſhion; where he was like to learn no craft or guile. If any body ſhould take the confidence to fancy that there might be a compact between *Jeſus* and him, to cry up and ſpeak great things of one another: He is confuted by the plain ſtory of both their lives. I have told you how far *Jeſus* was from ſeeking his own glory; and *John* Baptiſt was a man of ſuch confeſſed ſanctity and ſevere vertue, that none then could ſuſpect him of ſuch a guilt. Beſides that it is manifeſt they never had ſeen one another, at leaſt *John* had no knowledge of our Saviour, until He came to be baptized of him: when he immediately proclaimed him to be that perſon whom he had magnified ſo much, and told them ſhould be preferred above himſelf, before he had any ſuch acquaintance with him. And it is not unfit to be remembred, that

even before he was born, *John* Baptiſt leaped in his Mothers womb, when the bleſſed Virgin came to viſit her; as if he had then begun to confeſs him to be the LORD (as his Mother calls him, i. *Luke* 41, 43.) and to rejoyce to be a WITNESS unto ſo great a perſon.

For a concluſion of this, let the place be noted where *Jeſus* came to be baptized of *John*; and where he gave ſo ample a teſtimony to him: For from thence we ſhall draw ſomething, which will help to ſettle this belief in us, that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. It was at BETHABARA *beyond Jordan*, as S. *John* has recorded, i. *John* 28. There the Prieſts and Levites, who were deputed by the *Sanhedrim*, or great Council at *Jeruſalem* to go and examine him, received their Anſwer from him again and again, that he was not the CHRIST: For there he was baptizing, and there *Jeſus* came to receive his baptiſm; for as he was ſpeaking thoſe words which you read *ver.* 27. and ſaying he was *not worthy to looſe the latchet of his Shooes*; *Jeſus came from Galilee* (as S. *Matthew* writes, iii. 13.) *to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.* Now this Name BETHABARA ſignifies the *place of paſſage*,

sage, or *going over* (בית *Beth* in their language being an *house* or *place*, and עבר *Abara*, a *passing over* from one place unto another) and therefore in all likelihood hereabouts the children of *Israel* went over this River *Jordan*, when they entred upon the land of *Canaan*. This was the place of their passage, when God brought them out of the Wilderness to their desired possession; and so had the name of *Bethabara* affixed to it, in memory of so great a blessing.

Now *Jesus* being baptized at that very place where *Joshua* or *Jesus* (as he is called iv. *Hebr.* 8.) conducted the children of *Israel* over that River unto their rest; and receiving there such a testimony both from God the Father, and likewise from *John* the Prophet of the highest: It was a notable sign and token (joyned with those two) that this person called *Jesus* also was He that should lead them into the Heavenly rest, and be the *Captain of their salvation*. And the *Holy Ghost* descending also in this very place upon him; here he was anointed to be the Guide, the Leader and Conductor of God's people: that is (as we render the word ἀρχηγὸς, v. *Acts* 31.) *a* PRINCE *and a Saviour*, who

should put them in possession of the greatest blessings. As *Moses laid his hands* on *Joshua* near this place (which we may reasonably conjecture from xxxiv. *Deut.* 9.) and made him the Ruler and Governour of that Nation: so here did God himself *give all things into the hands of Jesus*, by the Holy Ghost coming down upon his head, appointing, constituting and ordaining him to be the Royal Prophet who should bring all the world to his obedience.

And it is observable, that to this place our Saviour a great while after returned again, and there made his residence, when the *Pharisees* sought to kill him, x. *John* 40. I cannot but think that this Evangelist would have us learn something from his so particular remembrance of this place, both at our Saviours baptism, and at his return again into the Country beyond *Jordan*. For it is not their manner to mention such circumstances in so short a History as this is, without some considerable reason. Now as we have guessed at the cause of his being baptized and receiving the testimony of *John* at *Bethabara*; so it is likely the reason why our Saviour went hither again and here *abode* was, that he might call to the peoples

peoples mind what had been done here formerly; the Teſtimony which *John* received from God concerning him, and the Teſtimony which thereupon *John* gave to them of him, at this remarkable place. For he knew *thoſe things which were done at Bethabara,* had a great force in them to work a much better diſpoſition in the people, than was in the murderous hearts of thoſe at *Jeruſalem,* and to move them to become his Diſciples. According to which ſuppoſition you read in the very next words (x. *John* 41,42.) that many reſorting to him, began to diſcourſe among themſelves concerning *John,* and of what he had ſpoken concerning our Saviour (for which we can find no occaſion but the place, and perhaps our Saviours putting them in mind what had been ſaid and done here) and that *many believed on him THERE.* The word *there* is to be remarked; for it tells us that theſe Diſciples were won to *Jeſus* at that place, where *John at firſt baptized.* They remembred, it is probable, what he had ſaid; how he told them, that he ſaw the Holy Ghoſt here deſcend and remain upon him, and that this was he whom he had ſpoken of before who was greater than himſelf; and that he *ſaw and bare record*

that this is the Son of God. And they likewiſe now beheld ſome *miracles* wrought by our Saviour (whereas *John* wrought none) which proved *John*'s words to be *true which he ſpake of him*, that he ſhould be *preferred before him*: be the true *Joſhua* whom they muſt all follow, the Meſſiah, the KING of *Iſrael*, to whoſe conduct they muſt truſt, if they meant to enter into reſt.

I have done with the *firſt* BAPTISM, that of *John*; which if you conſider throughly, the Perſon from whom *Jeſus* received it, the place where he went into the water, the teſtimony that was here given him, both by the *Father*, by the *Holy Ghoſt*, and by *John*; you will eaſily grant it might well be affirmed in reſpect to all theſe, that *he came by WATER*, and that this was one of his WITNESSES.

II. It is time now to come to the *ſecond* particular, and take into conſideration awhile his OWN BAPTISM which he adminiſtred: For that is not without ſome proof, that he was the CHRIST. Indeed *Jeſus* himſelf baptized not, but his Diſciples, as you read, iv. *John* 2. But

yet

yet because whatsoever a Servant doth by the authority of his Master, it is reputed the Masters Act, and he himself is said to do it; therefore *Jesus* alio is said to baptize in the same Evangelist, iii. 26. iv. 1. Now this was an argument to the *Jews* that he was the Messiah.

1. First, because all expected that the Messiah or CHRIST should come with *Baptism*, and thereby *renew the world*, as the *Hebrew* Doctors sometime speak. It began they say in the time of *Moses*, when he brought them to receive the Law from God, and entred them by this Ceremony of washing into a new Religion, xix. *Exod.* 10, 14. By which they tell us, *Proselytes* were received into their communion in succeeding times; when they passed from the state of *Gentilism*, and were regenerated to worship God with the *Israelites*. And therefore when CHRIST came, and with him a *new world* (for there is nothing more common in their Books than to call his days, The WORLD TO COME) they concluded he should begin it with *Baptism*, as *Moses* did that frame of things which he erected.

This is certain, it was one of their marks of him, that in his days there should be an universal Baptism and cleansing of the people. Which they gather from xiii. *Zach.* 1. where we read of a *FOUNTAIN opened for sin and for uncleanness*: and from several places in the Prophet *Isaiah*, where he speaks of the *Waters in the wilderness* (in which S. *Mark* tells us *John baptized*, i. 4.) and from the xxxvi. *Ezek.* 25. where he says, *I will sprinkle Water upon you*, &c. *a new heart also will I give you*: which is applied by the Apostles to the days of Christ, who began his new Kingdom with *washing with Water* or Baptism in his name. And therefore when *John* the Baptist came with this Water, they sent, as I noted before, to know of him who he was, thinking he might be *the Christ*. For which there appears no reason (for he did not work so much as one miracle) but that *all Judea, and all the region about Jordan went out to him, and were BAPTIZED of him in Jordan confessing their sins*, iii. *Matth.* 5, 6. And therefore when He told them that he was not the CHRIST, nor *Elias*, nor that *other Prophet*; whom they expected to accompany him, they ask him then, i. *John* 25. *Why BAPTIZEST thou*, if thou art none

none of these? They thought it was not in the power of any man to institute and introduce this new Ceremony, unless he was either *the CHRIST* or his *Forerunner*, or some other *Prophet* (*Jeremiah* it is like) who they fansied should rise from the dead and come along with him. A *new* Ceremony I call it, because though we should grant that *Baptism* was in use among them (as much hath been said by Mr. *Selden** among others to prove it) yet thereby they only received Proselytes and their children from other Countries. But it was not the manner to baptize *Jews*, such as were grown and adult; much less did any of the Masters in *Israel* gather Disciples after this fashion; and therefore the *Sanhedrim* might well send to enquire who this was, that took upon him to call all the Country to repent, and sanctifie themselves; and also like a Prophet had particular scholars ministring unto him.

* *Lib. de Jure Nat. & L. de Succession.*

The most learned of the *Jews* indeed had but confused notions of things to come, and the *Priests* and *Levites* you see here by their questions, did not certainly know whether Baptizing with such an authority, was a sign that a man was the Christ or not: yet they generally inclined

to

to believe that it was a note of him, as may be gathered, I think, from iii. *Luke* 15. where you read that *the people were in expectation* (knew not what to think, but waited that *John* would declare *the Christ* to them) *and ALL MEN mused in their hearts of John*, that is, *debated* and *reasoned* within themselves (as it is in the Margin) whether *John* would at last declare himself to be *the Christ* or not. And another Argument there is to prove that they lookt upon *Baptism* as a mark of the *Messiah*; for as soon as our Saviour began to make this his business, and to authorize his Disciples to baptize, then they were more *in suspense* (as that word *expectation* in S. *Luke* now mentioned may be rendred) than ever: And knew not what to imagine, when they saw two great men doing one and the same thing, and thereby drawing the people after them. But after they had debated the matter better, it seems they began to leave their opinion of *John*'s being the Messiah, and to look rather upon *Jesus* as the person; at least to have some thoughts that it might be so.

For we find in iii. *John* 25. that there arose a controversie between some of *John*'s Disciples and some *Jews* who were not his Disciples,

Disciples, *about purifying or cleansing*: by which may be understood *Baptism*, which was the sign and the instrument of it. And the dispute (as far as the following discourse directs our conjectures) was this, Whether their Master *John*'s Baptism, or that of *Jesus* was the best, and which of them a *Jew* should receive? For they saw them both baptise, *Jesus in Judea*, *ver.* 22. and *John*, *in Enon near to Salim*, *ver.* 23. To which of these places therefore they should resort seems to be the question. If *John*'s baptism was from Heaven, why should it be laid aside, or why should another come and take his work out of his hand? Was *Jesus* now sent with a greater authority, so that they must leave *John*, and go to him? To this his Disciples being able to give no satisfaction, they go to the Master himself for a resolution, and tell him, *Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan to whom thou bare'st witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.* As much as to say, we are much perplexed, being in doubt which of you two to receive for our Master. For *Jesus* who was *baptized of thee at Bethabara* (a note they imagined of his inferiority to *John*) and yet had a testimony from thy self that he was sent of God too; does not only now take

take upon him thy office, and thereby leſſen and extenuate thy authority, but quite eclipſes and obſcures thee, baptizing far more than thou doſt. Which ſhows that they began to conceive *John* was not the man they had taken him for; but that *Jeſus* rather ſhould enjoy that name which they had been apt hitherto to beſtow upon him: and their Argument was, becauſe *Jeſus* baptized more Diſciples than the other did.

To this *John* anſwers in the next words, *ver.* 27. *A man can receive* (or take unto himſelf) *nothing, except it be given him from Heaven.* That is, let not this trouble you, that *Jeſus* Baptizes, and all come to him; it is no more than I told you, that I was no body in compariſon with him. For no man can honeſtly aſſume more authority to himſelf than his Commiſſion gives him. And for that reaſon I could not do ſo much as *Jeſus* does, becauſe I have not received ſo much, nor can pretend ſo large a power from God, who alone can give it. And then he adds, that it is ſtrange they ſhould forget what he had told them in expreſs words, *ver.* 28. *Ye your ſelves bear me witneſs, that I ſaid,* I AM NOT THE CHRIST, *but that I*

am

am ſent before him. That is, it is a wonder you raiſe this diſpute, when I never gave you any occaſion to fancy me to be as great as he; but told you plainly, as you your ſelves may remember, that I was not your KING anointed by God to rule over you; all the honour that I had being no more than this, to be ordered to come and prepare his way for him. I never intended that my waſhing you with Water, or gathering Diſciples, ſhould be a mark that I was the CHRIST: Alas! I only baptized you with the water of repentance, that you might be diſpoſed to believe on him, who I told you was *coming.* To whom you would do well, now that he is come, to go and be baptized of him. For he brings a nobler baptiſm than that of mine, being as much above me as the Bridegroom at a wedding is above him who only waits upon him, and prepares things belonging to the marriage. That's the ſence of the 30. *verſe.* I never intended to ſet up my ſelf as the Principal perſon in this buſineſs, that we are come about. For I know very well, that *he who hath the bride, is the bridegroom,* that is, he is the Head of the Church or people of God, to whom God hath deſigned that high honour. And that is *Jeſus,* not I, who am only

only *his Friend*, sent before to make things ready for him. It is a great honour for me to be one of his Disciples, and to receive his instructions. And I am glad with all my heart that I live to hear him preach. It is an exceeding great pleasure to me, all the joy I can desire, to hear him, the Bridegroom speaking to his Bride the Church, and telling her himself what he intends to do for her, and what he would have her to do. Question no more therefore to whom you should go for purifying from your sins, nor think it strange that he Baptizes more than I. For *He must increase, but I must decrease, ver.* 30. There remains now nothing for me to do; but I must be obscure, as *Theophylact* glosses, like the day-Star when the Sun arises. All must become his Disciples, even they who now are mine, and I my self too, as in truth I am. For he says, the Friend of the Bridegroom, that is, himself, *standeth* (which was the posture of a Scholar before his Master) *and heareth him, rejoycing greatly because of his voice*, that is, because he is come to teach, who could do it better than himself. For there is as much difference, he presently adds in the next words, *ver.* 31. (which I have explained before) between their two doctrines, as there

there is between the Heaven and the Earth. And therefore they must needs be inexcusable who did not *receive his testimony* (*ver.* 32.) and become his Disciples. Who came with such authority from God (*ver.* 33.) and had not the Spirit by measure (*ver.* 34.) but the power to reveal the whole will of God, and do all his pleasure (*ver.* 35.) For, as he concludes, *everlasting life* is the portion of him who believeth on *Jesus*: but if a man believe not, *he shall never see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Thus you see *John* himself directs them again unto *Jesus*, and bids them go to his Baptism, become his Disciples, and no longer doubt whether he was the Christ or not. For as he did not pretend to an equality with *Jesus*, so they should see his fame continually decline and grow less, by the growth of the Glory of *Jesus*, who should shine alone by himself, and quite darken him. So *Gregory* * the Great expounds those words now mentioned (*ver.* 30.) *He must increase, and I must decrease*; the sence of which he seems to have hit better than any that I have seen, when he says: *In what was John diminished, and our Saviour advanced but in this: that the people seeing*

* *Hom.* 20. *in Evang.*

seeing the abstinence of John, and his retirement from the society of the world, imagined him to be the Christ; whereas our Saviour, whom they beheld eating with Publicans, and keeping the company of sinners, they fancied was not the Christ, but only a Prophet? But when in process of time, both Jesus who was taken for a Prophet, appeared to be the Christ; and John who was taken for the Christ, was discovered to be but a Prophet: then was fulfilled what he had foretold, He must increase and I must decrease. For both our Saviour increased in the esteem of the people, because he was acknowledged to be what he was; and John decreased, because he ceased to be called what he was not.

2. And this leads me to the next consideration, which I shall but briefly mention. That as *John* directed them to prefer our Saviours *Baptism* before his, and to become the Disciples of a far greater Master: so the end of the Baptism of *Jesus* was to entertain men for his Disciples, that thereby they might make profession of their belief in him. And here now our Saviour began to eclipse the lustre of *John*, and showed himself much superiour to him: both in that he did not administer *Baptism* himself by his own hands, as *John* did,

did, but appointed his Disciples to do it, who thereby became equal with *John*; and that he gathered Disciples to *himself*, whereas *John* Baptized them into the belief of him that was to come after him, as you read expresly, xix. *Acts* 4. None I suppose can doubt of this, but that they who received baptism from our Saviour's Disciples, who waited constantly upon him, did thereby own *Jesus* for *a Teacher* or Master *sent of God* (as *Nicodemus* speaks, iii. *John* 2.) and consequently professed themselves desirous to learn of him, and ready to believe what he taught. But I cannot say that they baptized them now into the Name of *Jesus*, or into a belief that he was *the Christ*, as they did after his ascension into Heaven. For they were forbid to publish this openly, xvi. *Matth.* 20. men were to learn it by degrees under his discipline, to which they delivered themselves by being baptized of him. Yet this prepared them for the belief that he was their *Christ*: which his Apostles afterward most zealously and strongly asserted by Baptism. For when he was exalted at Gods right hand, they went, according to his Commission, and *Discipled all Nations*, baptizing them into his name, as well as into the name of the Father.

That is, they engaged them to believe, that *Jesus* was the Christ, the Son of God, otherways they would not baptize them.

By this WATER therefore he may be said to *come*, because he hereby made proselytes to himself, whom he undertook to teach and instruct after the manner of the Prophets, but with an authority which spoke him to be greater than all Prophets; and because it was not a baptism like *John*'s, with simple water, but was presently after accompanied with the Holy Ghost. Nay, the Baptism it self was a WITNESS to him (joyned with what went before) because it argued authority, and such as was much superiour to that of *John*, though he was greater than any Prophet: which could be no other therefore but that of *Christ*. For who beside could baptize the whole Nation, and into an higher Institution, than his whom they took for the Christ? who confessed and asserted (and no body appeared to contradict it) that he *was not that light* (by whom they must begin to be *illuminated* by Baptism) but *Jesus* was *the true light, which coming into the world lighteneth every man*. *John*'s baptism therefore, as

S. *Basil*

S. *Basil** aptly calls it, was only εἰσαγωγικὸν, introductory to something else more perfect than it self: that is, to our Saviour's baptism, which was τελειωτικὸν, that which completed men in a full belief that he was the *Christ*.

* *Exhort. ad Bapt.*

3. For lastly, the Baptism which the Apostles administred, especially after his Resurrection and Exaltation, was an entrance of men into a new Religion: For they did not baptize them *into Moses*, but into another Name, that of the *Lord Jesus*. This was a sign that He, who had so many ways been approved of God among them, as S. *Peter* speaks, was indeed the Christ. For what greater mark could there be of supreme authority, than the setting up, in such a manner as he did, an Institution and Discipline which was not known before; and teaching those who received his baptism, to observe a new Law, without those rites which had been hitherto used? Who could repeal the Ordinances of *Moses*, nay, abrogate Circumcision, which was ancienter than *Moses*; but only He who had the same power with him that gave the Law to *Moses*, and Circumcision to *Abraham* their Father, *viz.* the Son of God himself? Yet

this did our *Jeſus*; and Baptiſm was the Rite appointed by him for the admiſſion of Diſciples into the profeſſion of this new Religion, which took away the old as unprofitable. By this they were *born again*, and became his children, that is, his ſcholars (for the *ſons* or children *of the Prophets* were their diſciples, thoſe who learnt of them) whom he indued with his principles and called after his name. And he plainly declared, as you read in his diſcourſe with *Nicodemus*, that no man could have any part in that Kingdom, which the Meſſiah was ſetting up in the world, if he contented himſelf with the old Religion, and were not *by baptiſm born again*; that is, ſuffered himſelf to be further informed, and proceeded to entertain the Religion which he delivered. Thus far *Nicodemus* was gone already, to believe him to be *a Maſter ſent of God*, which was the opinion of others of their Rulers beſides himſelf; for he ſays *WE know* it. Why then did he not own it by receiving his baptiſm, and thereby put himſelf under the diſcipline of this Maſter? That being inſtructed by him till he acknowledged that he was *the Chriſt*, he might be taught at laſt *by the Spirit*, when it came down upon the Apoſtles; and ſo be perfectly

born

born again, or informed in the Christian Religion. Till this was done he was but ἐξ ἡμισείας φιλόχριστος (as *Gregory Nazianz.* * calls him) *a lover of Christ by halves.* To make him an intire Christian, he was to receive his Baptism, and to own him to have full power and authority from God to make what change he pleased, so far as to turn them into new men, and to make them over again. The *Pharisees* one would think saw very well that this was the consequence of his gathering so many disciples by baptism, that he out-did *John* the Baptist. For to avoid their rage which they had conceived against *him* upon this account, but never expressed against *John*, *he left Judea* (where he was baptizing, as you heard before, iii. 22.) because they had great power there, and *departed into Galilee again*, where their authority was less, iv. 1, 2, 3. They were afraid of an innovation in the state of things, which they had a mind should continue as they were. Their Baptism they saw would signifie nothing, if he went on thus to make disciples. Whom he informed according to his own mind, and perswaded to believe on him as their *King*, in whose Sovereign power it was to make *all old things pass away, and cause all things to become new.*

* Orat. 16.

By this WATER therefore He may be ſaid to COME, and it may be called one of his WITNESSES, as he *baptized*, that is, gave his Apoſtles authority to baptize men, not into *Moſes*, but into himſelf; to learn new leſſons of him, and to leave the old, though they had been taught by God himſelf. Who found no fault at all with this *baptiſm*, but juſtified it, as you ſhall ſee, many ways, to be according to his mind, and in purſuance of his will.

And ſo much pains may ſuffice about the examination of the *firſt* WITNESS of theſe *three* that ſpeak on *Earth*, which is WATER: The *Holineſs* of *Jeſus* both in his Doctrine and Life; and the *Baptiſm*, both of *John* and of *Jeſus*.

I wiſh that every one who conſiders how great and neceſſary a proof this was, of *Jeſus* his being the Son of God, would labour to prove himſelf to be indeed born of him by the ſame argument of purity and holineſs. For as we could never have believed *Jeſus* to have been God's Son, unleſs he had come thus by Water; no more can any man rationally conclude that

that he is one of thoſe whom he will own for his children, unleſs he conform to his holy will, by waſhing himſelf from all filthineſs, and becoming clean every whit. Read over the Sermons and the Life of Chriſt, and remember that your Baptiſm engages you to learn of him, and to become like him. Expreſs that Honour towards God, that Fear and that Love of him which he requires. Imploy your ſelves carefully in all actions of Juſtice, Charity, and Sobriety. Yea, be prepared chearfully to follow him, in ſuffering as well as in doing his bleſſed will. This will be an infallible teſtimony, that you are the children of God; as, on the contrary, if you want this Witneſs, all other evidence of it will fail you. There is no reaſon to diſtruſt this; but the ſtronger your confidence is without it, the more groſly you deceive your ſelves, if you conclude your ſelves to be dear to him. You find both theſe ſtrongly aſſerted in this Epiſtle. For the Affirmative read, ii. 29. *If ye know that he is righteous, know ye that every one that doth righteouſneſs is born of him.* And iii. 7. *Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, even as he is righteous.* For the Negative, read the following words,

ver. 8, 9, 10. *He that committeth sin, is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the Devil: whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.*

And for your encouragement to purifie your Souls, remember that the purity and holiness of Christ's Life and Doctrine, secures you of the truth of all his gracious promises. We may say with a greater assurance than the *Psalmist* did in his days (xii. *Psal.* 6.) *The words of the Lord* (i. e. his promises) *are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of Earth, purified seven times.* Which should make us value them more than *thousands of Gold and Silver*, though never so perfectly refined; and to say as he does in another place, cxix. 140. *Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.* Those Metals are not freer from Dross, after they have passed never so oft through the Fining-pot, than his promises

are

are from all mixture of deceit. We may rely upon them with the greateſt confidence, and be ſecure they will never fail us. It is as certainly true, that God will take us to be his Sons and Daughters, that he will *dwell in* us, and give us everlaſting life, as it is, that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. He that ſays the one, ſays the other too: and he may be alike believed in both.

But then, *having theſe promiſes, we muſt cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God*, 2 *Cor.* vii. 1. For the Son of God was manifeſted, you heard, for this purpoſe. And this was the end for which *he gave himſelf* (*i. e.* to die for us) *that he might ſanctifie and cleanſe his Church, with the waſhing of Water, by the Word* (v. Epheſ. 26.) *and redeeming us from all iniquity, purifie to himſelf a peculiar people Zealous of good works*, i. *Tit.* 14. Which if we ſtudy ſincerely, then this WATER here ſpoken of, is part of the *Waters of Life*: and this Teſtimony gives us aſſurance that we ſhall have our ſhare in thoſe Eternal good things, which he hath promiſed in his holy Goſpel: For he is the Truth, and in him there is no Lye. But of this more hereafter, when we have heard the following

lowing Witnesses, and given glory to Jesus, and made our acknowledgments to him in some such words as these.

A Prayer.

I *Believe, O Lord, not only that thou art* a Teacher come from God, *and* speakest the words of God; *but that thou art* above all, *the very* WORD *of God it self; into whose hands* the Father hath given all things. *I admire the holiness of all thy Precepts, and rejoyce in the purity of thy exceeding great and precious promises. Thou art* the Truth, *the* Holy one of God, *without spot or blemish, in whose mouth was found* no guile. *There is all reason that we should* receive thy testimony, *which thou hast given of thy self; and all that thou hast testified to us to be the will of God; and believe that* without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

Good Lord, increase my Faith: *that as I see still further demonstrations of thy power and glory, and cannot but acknowledge the*

perfect

perfect ſanctity, equity and goodneſs of all thy Laws, and be in love with the beauty of thy moſt holy life; ſo I may feel my heart inclined more and more to ſubmit it ſelf to be governed by thee, to obey thy will, and to imitate thy example. Happy are thoſe holy Souls who have learnt of thee to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world; *and whoſe hearts, by that means, are full of the bleſſed hope of immortality hereafter, and of thy tender care of them, while they are here. There is nothing ſo deſirable, as* to be holy even as thou who haſt called us art holy, in all manner of converſation. *It is the perfection of our Nature, the end of our Being, and the true ſatisfaction of our hearts; to have thy image formed in us in righteouſneſs and ſincere holineſs. Imprint this ſenſe deeper, O bleſſed God, in mine and every Chriſtian heart. That it may be our perpetual delight, as well as our ſtudy, to give thee the* honour *that is due unto thy Name; to* love *thee with all our heart and ſoul and ſtrength; to preſerve an holy* fear *of thee in our mind; to* truſt *in thee and caſt our care upon thee; to* hope *in thy never-failing mercies; and to* rejoyce *evermore in thy love and that good hope, which are better than life it ſelf.*

O that we may never ceaſe to teſtifie our true love, and honour, and fear of thee, with all other religious affections, by praying *without ceaſing; and offering the ſacrifice of* praiſe *continually; and in every thing* giving thanks, *eſpecially for the oblation which our Lord made of himſelf to thee: which love, may it be publiſhed with perpetual praiſe and thanks, every where, to the end of the world. And give us the grace to add unto our love of thee, a ſincere and unfeigned love of all men. That* we may do to them, whatſoever we deſire that they ſhould do to us. *Let this be the conſtant Rule of all our deſigns, deſires, words and actions. Let it ever be before our eyes, to make us duly honour and obſerve our ſuperiours; pity, ſuccour, relieve, and comfort all thoſe who are below us; and be juſt, faithful and friendly to all others. O that every man would ſpeak the truth with his neighbour; and be charitable in their judgments one of another; meek and gentle in all their words and behaviour, ready to diſtribute and to do good; ſtudious of the things that make for peace; forward to be reconciled to thoſe who have offended them; to paſs by injuries, and to do good for evil; and eſpecially to* be kindly affectioned one to another in the love of the Brethren; in honour preventing one another. *For*

For which end, endue us all with true humility of Spirit; with very contented minds and moderate desires. Let no covetousness, no ambition, or love of any pleasure, betray us to dishonour thee, hurt our neighbours, or abuse our selves. Help us to possess our bodies in sanctification and honour; to preserve our hearts chaste and pure; to be temperate in all things; to mortifie our members that are on the Earth; to put away all foolish talking and corrupt communication out of our mouth; and to abstain from all appearance of evil.

Finally, whatsoever things are sincere and true, whatsoever things are grave and honest, whatsoever things are just and equal, whatsoever things are pure and modest, whatsoever things are amiable and endearing, whatsoever things are of good fame and well spoken of, if there be any occasion to exercise a vertue, if there be any thing laudable, dispose us to have these things always in our mind, and to be readily prepared for them. That so we may be good in every relation; Governours and Subjects, Priests and People, Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, doing their duties faithfully, and to their mutual comfort, joy and satisfaction. And if thy wise Providence

call

call any of us to part with any thing for thy names sake. O that our Love may give an eminent proof of its sincerity, by resolved and patient suffering, with an humble, meek and chearful submission to thy holy will.

Then shall our Souls rejoyce and triumph in thee, when we not only call thee, Lord and Master, *but* do those things that thou sayest. *It will be our exceeding joy to think that thou lovest us as thy children, and delightest to behold thine own Image in us. We shall rejoyce that thou reignest, and rejoyce again in hope that we shall reign with thee. Blessing, honour, glory and praise shall we be for ever giving unto thee;* who hast washed us from our sins in thy own bloud, *and* redeemed us from all iniquity, that we should be holy and unblameable before God in love; looking for thy mercy unto eternal life. *Amen,* and *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Concerning the Second *Witneſs upon Earth, the* BLOUD.

COME we now to hear what the next *Witneſs* ſays, which we ſhall find to give in an Evidence as ſtrong as the former, and that is *the* BLOUD. By this word every body preſently underſtands the *Sufferings* and DEATH of *Jeſus*; when his *Bloud*, you know, was ſhed upon the Croſs, in a moſt ignominious manner. For that envy which began to riſe in the *Phariſees* hearts (as I obſerved in the end of the foregoing Chapter, from iv. *John* 1.) when they ſaw him baptize ſo many diſciples; never ceaſed boiling till it turned into perfect Gall, and the rankeſt hatred and malice in the World: which was never ſatisfied till they had *baptized him* (as *S. Luke* ſpeaks, xii. 50.) with his own bloud.

bloud. For the present indeed, as you read there and in many other places, he avoided their snares, and went out of their way when he thought they intended to apprehend him, because he would preserve himself till he had preached all the Country over. But when that was done, he suffered them to take him at a publick feast, and delivering up himself into their hands, let them do with him just as their murderous malice inclined them.

Now this voluntary Oblation and Sacrifice of himself to suffer what they pleased to inflict, was such an evidence, that in truth he was the Son of God, as he had made his disciples believe, that there is a particular mark set upon it, to this purpose, both by himself and by his Apostles. He himself, in his discourse with *Pontius Pilate,* just before his crucifixion, and when he stood before him condemned by the *Jews,* for saying he was the *Son of God,* expressly affirms, that *for this end he was born, and therefore he came into the world, that he might bear witness to the truth,* xviii. *John* 37. Which was as much as to declare, that he had rather die than lose the end for which he had lived thus long; which was, to speak the Truth, and particularly

ticularly this Truth, that he was indeed a KING (as you there read) the very Son of God. This was the thing he would juſtifie, whatſoever he ſuffered for it. God had appointed him to ſeal this with his death, and to atteſt it in the moſt ſolemn manner, even before his Judge here on Earth, and when he was going to be judged by God; and therefore he would not for all the world deny it, or not confeſs it. We ordinarily ſay, when we would affirm any thing very ſtrongly, that if it was the laſt thing that ever we ſhould ſpeak, we would not ſtick to maintain it. And juſt ſo did our Saviour; I came, ſays he, into the world for this end, to *bear witneſs to the truth*, and here I take it upon my death that I do not ſwerve from it in the leaſt, when I ſay, that I am the *Son of God.*

S. *Paul* alſo, as I have noted already, takes particular notice of this, when he remembers *Timothy*, 1 vi. 13. how *Jeſus did* WITNESS *a good confeſſion before Pontius Pilate.* That is, aſſerted this Truth, that he was a KING, though not of this world, by confeſſing it before him, who ſate in judgment upon him, with the apparent danger of his life. He durſt not

retract any thing which he knew to be a truth, though he knew withall it would prove so costly, that he must defend it with his *bloud*. He stood in this to the very last, that he was the CHRIST, and durst not to save such a precious life speak one word otherwise: for then he knew that he should have been a lyar, like the *Jews* who denied it.

This that hath been thus premised to the following discourse, is very serviceable to the demonstrating what a Witness his BLOUD was: because it calls to mind that which is necessary to be here again considered, how he lost his life for nothing else, but merely because he confessed that he was *their CHRIST, the Son of the Blessed*. Many causes of death were industriously sought for, and sundry false witnesses boldly rose up against him; and yet none of their testimonies, when they came to be scan'd, were found to be *true* (as S. *Mark*'s expression is, xiv. 56, 59.) *equal* to the endictment or charge that was brought against him, and to the intended judgment which was to pass upon him. There was nothing ponderous enough, of sufficient weight to justifie such a sentence as that of death, which they were desirous

to pronounce upon him: and therefore they despaired of attaining their end, unless they could have such words out of his own mouth, as in their opinion would prove him a blasphemer; for which they might justly condemn him. *Which of you* (says he himself, viii. *John* 46.) *convinceth me of sin?* No, when they must either prove *him* a sinner, or *themselves* for apprehending him without a cause; they were not able, no, not by the help of a great sin, in bringing false witnesses into open Court, to fasten any crime upon him, which would touch his life. All that they could find to warrant a sentence so heavy, was nothing but what they got out of his own mouth; by adjuring him in the name of God, to tell them whether he were *the* CHRIST.

His affirming this was the thing for which he was adjudged by the great Council of *Jerusalem*, to suffer death. This was the only truth they told *Pilate*, when they brought him into his Court, that *he made himself* CHRIST, *a* KING, xxiii. *Luke* 2. xix. *John* 7. This was the inscription over his head, the Title upon the Cross, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS, xxiii. *Luke* 38. This was

the thing they ſcoffed at, after they had condemned him themſelves, xxvi. *Matth.* 68. and which they taught the ſouldiers to mock him withall, after he was condemned by *Pilate*, xv. *Mark* 18. and which the Chief Prieſt, with the Scribes and Elders, made the ſubject of their taunts and jeers, as he hung upon the Croſs, xxvii. *Matth.* 40, 41, 42, 43. Read all theſe places, and you will ſee, that the aſſerting of this being the cauſe of his ſufferings and ſhame, S. *John* had reaſon to alledge his BLOUD as a great evidence or *Witneſs* to this Truth.

Now that the ſtrength of its teſtimony may the better appear, let theſe things following be diſtinctly conſidered.

I. *Firſt*, that *Bloud* is the life of every living Creature; and therefore the pouring out of this is the loſing of ones life. It is not only a frequent Precept in the Law of *Moſes*, that they ſhould not eat the *bloud*, becauſe it was the life of the Beaſt; but common obſervation teaches us, that it is the Vehicle or Chariot wherein the Spirits ride their Circuit round the Body; and that if it loſe its way and run out of the Body, all motion ceaſes, the Spirits flying away together with it. II. Con-

II. Conſider then further, that nothing is ſo ſweet as Life, and that of all other things we naturally moſt abhor death. All that we eat and drink is to prevent it; and men are too much inclined to do unworthy things to eſcape it, becauſe it robs us of all our enjoyments here, though never ſo near to us. *Skin upon skin* (ſays he who *hath the power of death*, ii. *Job* 4.) one skin after another, though it be never ſo tender and delicate, and never ſo painful to part with it, *Yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.*

III. Life therefore being a thing ſo pleaſant and deſirable, and Death ſo diſmal and affrightful; no man ſure in his perfect health and perfect wits, will be perſwaded to part with the one and run headlong into the other, for a mere fancy by which he received no benefit at all while he lived, and can hope for none when he is dead. What rational man is there (as our Saviour appears to be by all his diſcourſes and actions) who knows the value of Life; who that is not in a frenzy (the leaſt ſpice of which is not diſcernible in him) will chuſe to part with his life,

and so part with all his Friends, who are infinitely desirous of his company; when he may innocently save it, and comfortably enjoy those lovers, friends and acquaintance, and all other things which he must leave by dying? Ask your selves, (that's the best way) is Life such a trifle, that any of you are inclined to throw it away in a mere humour? Is it so contemptible, that a serious man and one that need not be miserable, will studiously lose it, only to be talkt of? Nay, would any of you take the most cruel pains and torments in your way to Death, and pass out of the world with all the disgrace imaginable, merely because you will? when it is as much in your power to free your selves from them all, and to live in pleasure, honour and good repute among your neighbours?

IV. Much less would any man, that is not beside himself, die for a lye. Death being uncomfortable in it self, would become still more dismal if it should be for that which we saw proved an *untruth*; but most of all black and dreadful if it must be endured for *a lye*; that is, for such an untruth as we had devised our selves, and knew to be a falsity; and whereby we intended

intended to deceive, and might have choſen whether we would have told it or no. If any man ſhould be tempted to tell a lye, yet what ſhould tempt him to endure the rack, yea to ſuffer death for it; when neither He nor any man elſe ſhall get any thing by it, and he might live far more honourably by telling the truth? Make your ſelves Judges, and enquire of your own minds, whether you can think of any thing that hath ſuch a power of perſwaſion in it. No, no, we all love life better than ſo. When a man will give all that he hath for it (as the Tempter himſelf ſaid) it were very ſtrange if he ſhould not part with a vain lye, that he might enjoy it.

And therefore the Apoſtle here bids us conſider this, that *Jeſus* CAME not *by WATER only*, but *by Water and* BLOUD. That is, He did not only *preach* this, and by his holy *Life* juſtifie his integrity in what he ſaid, but He *died* to atteſt this, and make it good. If the WATER be not enough to perſwade us that he did not falſifie, yet the *Water* and BLOUD together are ſufficient to confirm us in a ſtrong belief of his ſincerity. For ſhould the tongue of an honeſt man chance to ſlip,

and to speak on a sudden what he knew to be false, yet he would never be such a fool and a villain too, as to die to make it good: whereas *Jesus* both said and took it upon his death, that he was Gods Son; in neither of which such a person as he could possibly design to deceive us. He was not so shallow but he could easily see that a lye would sometime or other be disproved; for all men naturally hate it, and, when they have any suspicion, can never be at rest till they have discovered it. And therefore if he proposed to himself glory and honour, fame and a great reputation after a shameful death, he could never be secure that he should win it, but rather had just cause to fear the forgery would be detected: And then it would have proved a greater blot upon him, and more reproached his name, that he was a wilful obstinate Lyar, than the Cross or Gibbet, the buffetings, spittings, cruel mockings, and all the other indignities that he endured. This would have branded him with eternal infamy, and have made his name stink throughout the world. Nothing could have stigmatized him like this (unless it had been the mark of folly added to that of insincerity) that he was a shameless deceiver. And therefore

fore I conclude that he would *have witneſſed a good confeſſion* by denying all that he had ſaid concerning his being the *Son of God*; if he had not known aſſuredly that he had ſaid nothing but that great Truth, which muſt not be denied, whatſoever miſeries and diſgraces it coſt him to make it good.

V. And this truly is much to be conſidered, that if he had been wont to cheat and ſpeak falſely, there could not have been a more ſeaſonable time to make uſe of ſome lye, than now that it would coſt him his life to aſſert this, which, no doubt, he took for a truth. If he would but have denied this one thing, and ſaid that he was not the Son of God; all their malice, as I ſaid, could not have found a crime great enough to warrant the taking away of his life according to their Law. And therefore ſuppoſing him an Impoſtor and deceiver, as the *Jews* called him, he muſt be a very ſilly one, who would not now make uſe of his art to ſave himſelf; when that one little word *NO* would have done it, in anſwer to the queſtion, that the High Prieſt put to him. For what reaſon can be imagined why he ſhould now ſcruple to tell an untruth (if he were

were a man of that ſtamp) which would bring ſuch a great advantage to him as the preſervation of his life.

VI. He might at leaſt (eſpecially if he had dealt with *Beelzebub*, as the *Phariſees* calumniated him) have put ſome trick or other upon them, and ſhifted himſelf out of the hands of his enemies; for that would have got him more credit and fame than dying for a lye. Why did he not eſcape from them, if he had not both believed this, that he was the *Son of God*, and thought it neceſſary alſo to atteſt it, even with his BLOUD? Had he not opportunity to run away? or rather might he not have kept himſelf among his friends, far enough out of their reach? Was it not a queſtion whether he would come to the feaſt or not? xi. *John* 56. Nay, after *the aſſembly of the wicked had incloſed him*, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, had he not power to break through them, and make his eſcape? Yes ſure; for what elſe is the meaning of that which you read, xviii. *John* 6. that the *band* of men which came to apprehend him, *went backward, and fell to the ground*; when he did but tell them that He was the man whom they ſought for? Was not this a fit time to flye and

get

get away, when they had no ſtrength to lay hold on him? Had not he power as well to depart, as to weaken their hands that they could not approach him? Nay, was it not far eaſier to go away himſelf, than to make them lie proſtrate there? No doubt of it: only he would ſtand to it, as I ſaid, and make it good by his Bloud that he was the Son of God. He ſhowed that he had not loſt his power to baffle them, but his will was not to uſe it. His death was a voluntary Sacrifice; *He laid down his life* of his own accord, and *no man took it from him*, as it is x. *John* 18. All their Armies, had they *compaſſed him about* (to ſpeak in the *Pſalmiſts* phraſe) *as ſtrong Bulls of Baſhan*; had they *gaped upon him with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring Lion, i.e.* with the moſt greedy deſire to devour him, could not have touched him, unleſs he had been pleaſed to deliver himſelf up to their fury, and choſen to become their prey, that they might do execution upon him. And therefore it is moſt abſurd, and contrary to nature, to imagine, that He would have thus freely expoſed himſelf to ſuch cruelties and vile uſage as he ſaw was intended for him; unleſs he had certainly thought it a moſt eligible and honourable

thing

thing to endure them, in defence of a great Truth, which it concerned all the world to have well asserted, and vindicated from all suspicion of falshood.

Would it not have angred any man but Him, to be betrayed by a domestick servant, by a Friend; one whom he had freely chosen to be a great Minister in his Kingdom, and had made at present the keeper of his purse, besides many other favours conferred on him? Was it not a vile dishonour, first to be brought before the Magistrate as a Criminal, and then to be abused there by base souldiers, and the dregs of the people; as if there had not been a more contemptible wretch in the whole Country? What was it then to be beaten and cudgelled? to be spit upon and mocked? to be loaden with lyes and forgeries? to be condemned to suffer among thieves? to be counted less worthy to live than a murderer? to be scourged? to be crowned with thorns? to be crucified? that is, to endure a tedious, a disgraceful, a painful and accursed death; and after all this to be unpitied; to be laught at even upon the Cross, and called a senseless deceiver, who had not the wit to keep some of his kindness for himself; but

but having ſaved the lives of others could not now at laſt ſave his own? Can you think of any one that would have the heart to offer himſelf freely to ſuffer ſuch things, but only He, who took all this ſo patiently, that he did not utter one diſcontented or angry word? And who can think that he would have endured them, when he might have eaſily avoided it, unleſs he had thought it neceſſary and worthy to ſubmit himſelf to ſuch torments and reproaches, that he might confirm this Truth, and make it live by his bloudy death?

VII. Which had the greater efficacy in it to ſhow the importance of this Truth, and the certainty which he had of it; becauſe he affirmed it not only before the High Prieſt, when it was apparent they intended miſchief againſt him, but before *Pontius Pilate* alſo, as I obſerved above from xviii. *John* 37. when they were importunately deſiring him to condemn him. If we could imagine it was his raſhneſs and heat that made him ſay as he did, before the Council of *Jeruſalem*; yet he had time enough ſure to have cooled himſelf, before he came to be tried at this other tribunal of the *Gentiles*. Why did he not think of

ſome

some other answer, now that he saw the *Jews* were not in a sudden passion, and transported with a fit of rage to condemn him; but by a concocted hatred were resolved to pursue him till they had his bloud? There can no account be given of it but this, That his Death was an advised thing, and his BLOUD deliberately shed, to obtain the greater belief to him; because he professed again and again (though he knew he must die for it) that He was *CHRIST their KING.*

VIII. And observe likewise, that even when he was in the midst of his sufferings, and when he was ready to give up the ghost, He again sets his seal to this Truth; calling God his FATHER twice as he hung upon the Cross. First when he prayed for his Enemies, *FATHER forgive them,* xxiii. *Luke* 36. and then when he prayed for himself, *FATHER into thy hands I commend my Spirit, ver.* 46. With these words he resigned up his Soul to God. And had it not been a seasonable time now to retract what he had said, if it had not been a Truth which must be justified to the last gasp? How can any one think that a man who preached the Life and Judgment to come, and lived as if he believed

it,

it, would venture to die with a lye in his mouth? and that of so high a guilt? and which he knew also could not be long undetected here, as it would be severely punisht in another place? nay, which He himself, he knew very well, would presently confute? For he frequently had said, as his very enemies understood, that he would rise again the third day after he was killed; which he must needs think would prove a lye, if the other had been so, when he told them he was the *Son of God.*

God who only can raise the dead, but cannot lye, would never have justified so blasphemous a lye as this; and given it an undeniable authority, by fulfilling his word. For as his bloudy death plainly proved that he believed himself to be the Son of God, and took it for an undoubted truth; so his Resurrection was an infallible proof that he was not mistaken, but had witnessed that by his death, which was as true as he thought it. His Death show'd that he was certain of it; and his Resurrection makes us certain that he was not deceived. These two therefore must be joyned together to make up a complete evidence: and so they are, as

you

you shall see, for the Witness of the SPIRIT contains the Resurrection in it. Yet I must add that his BLOUD considered alone, did not barely prove that he believed he was Gods Son, and thought it the greatest sin to deny it; but it proved also that he had great reason for such a belief; Reasons so weighty that they overbalanced the natural love of life. And therefore this alone may be called one of his *Witnesses*, which not only justified his integrity, but declared that he had the greatest assurance, and the clearest evidence of that which he asserted: being so certain of it, that the fear of death could not make him doubt it, nor all the torments in the world tempt him to deny it.

IX. And if you consider what manner of person *Jesus* was, you will soon be satisfied also, that he was not liable to mistake strong fancies for weighty reasons: but was as far from being deceived himself, as he was from any intention to deceive others. The principal thing indeed which his *Bloud* testified was, that he did not on set purpose go about to put a cheat upon the World, or invented his Doctrine himself. Yet, all things considered, it proves

proves likewiſe that his Doctrine was true, and ought to be believed by us. For ſuch was the quality of his perſon and of the reſt of his Doctrine, that they plainly manifeſt He was neither led by fancy, nor poſſeſſed with any Demoniacal illuſion, when he ſaid he was *the Son of God.* So great was his wiſdom and the ſharpneſs of his underſtanding, that any man who hath not loſt his own underſtanding, may eaſily ſee, he could not be apt to be gull'd with the impoſtures of imagination. And ſo great and diſcreet was his Piety, that it is as viſible he was not obnoxious to be deluded any other way. When He was but a child, He amazed the principal men of the Nation with his queſtions and anſwers. And afterward in the whole courſe of his preaching, there appeared nothing but what declared a moſt prudent, ſober and excellently compoſed mind. Nothing of inequality and unevenneſs in his temper. No rapturous diſcourſes or ecſtatical expreſſions. Nothing that ſavoured of Melancholy, which impoſes upon ſome; or of Pride and Vanity which abuſes others. But the greateſt gravity and ſeriouſneſs, mixt with admirable ſweetneſs and humility, is the plain character of our Saviour. Then look over

all his Doctrine, and where ſhall we find any that ever ſpoke ſo clearly, and with ſo much Majeſty, of Righteouſneſs, Temperance, Charity and Piety; of all our duty towards God and Man, as he did? Who had the gift of comprehending much in a few, but perſpicuous words; of illuſtrating his Doctrine with apt and familiar reſemblances; of confirming it with powerful arguments, and of confuting all the cavils of his adverſaries with the ſtrongeſt reaſons. None of which things are to be found in any of thoſe who have been abuſed by their own fancies and paſſions, or by the juglings of evil Spirits: as will appear more plainly by conſidering a little more particularly thoſe two cavils.

Let it be taken then for granted, that there have been ſome men who meant not to deceive, that were notwithſtanding ſo overborn by a ſtrong fancy or haughty imagination, as not only to take their own dreams for Divine Revelations, but alſo moſt vehemently to aſſert them, even with the loſs of their liberties, eſtate, nay, and life it ſelf. And ſuppoſe withall that there have been ſome, who were ſo fully poſſeſſed with a conceit of nearer communion of God, that they took themſelves to be

be Chriſt himſelf, or Apoſtles ſent by him; and that no torments could perſwade them to think otherways. Yet ſee what a vaſt difference there is between ſuch vain pretenders and our bleſſed Saviour; even in the very words that they ſpake. And firſt I think it is very conſirable that you never read of any man ſo preſumptuous, as to fancy he was the very Son of God, who ſits at his right hand, and rules over all, and hath power to judge the quick and the dead. No, theſe vain Enthuſiaſts have only conceited, that they were, after I know not what ſpiritual manner, made one with Chriſt, and ſo united to God; that, as they phraſe it in ſwoln words of vanity, they were Godded with God, and Chriſted with Chriſt. But who diſcerns not the diſparity between this fooliſh language and the words of ſoberneſs which our Saviour ſpake? Which indeed is the moſt remarkable thing. If you conſider all the Doctrine of theſe empty Pretenders, there is nothing more ridiculous. They have ever affected big words, lofty and high-flown phraſes, and myſtical expreſſions, wherewith they love to ſtuff their Books and their diſcourſes: which either have no meaning; or if they have, it is very poor

and deſpicable, when it comes to be ſtript of the fantaſtical language wherewith it is cloathed. And therefore ſuch men have been ſo far from amazing any conſiderate perſons, that they have rather moved their laughter and ſcorn, while they heard them babble nothing but myſtical nonſence, with abundance of confident boldneſs.

And if they have found any followers, they were ſuch as had no depth, no ſolidity of judgment; but were carried away merely with the ſound of ſeemingly myſtical words; which they could never make any ſober perſon underſtand the ſence of. Whereas, on the contrary, the words of our Saviour are not only intelligible, but penetrate into the very heart and ſoul of him that reads them. Every man bears witneſs to moſt of them in his own Conſcience: And the reſt are ſuch as plainly aim at the ſame end, to oblige and encourage us to be more ſtrictly pious. And therefore He aſtoniſhed all his Auditors; who acknowledged an Authority in his words, greater than was in the diſcourſes of the wiſeſt men among them. They ſaid, never man ſpake like him. Whole Synagogues, as I have ſhown, wondred at the gracious words, that proceeded

ceeded out of his mouth. They enquired one of another, how a man ſhould come by all that wiſdom, who had no learned education. His adverſaries were often ſilenced by his anſwers. They found themſelves ſo non-pluſt, that they durſt not ask him any more queſtions, merely for fear of being more confounded. All which, and much more that might be ſaid, is a ſufficient evidence that he knew very well what He ſaid, and underſtood his doctrine, and was a perſon of a clear reaſon; who could not be abuſed by the impoſtures of fancy and imagination.

X. And as for the other cavil, that poſſibly a man may ſuffer the illuſion of evil Spirits, which may make him confident without reaſon: Let it be alſo granted, becauſe the Devil hath ſometimes *transformed himſelf into an Angel of light*, as the Apoſtle S. *Paul* ſpeaks; and ſo might perſwade men that God or an Angel had ſpoken to them, or that they had viſions and revelations from above; with which conceit He might ſo poſſeſs them, that they might be ready to take it upon their death, that they ſaid nothing but the Truth. But withall it is notoriouſly evident that ſuch a perſon as our Saviour could not be

liable to such diabolical impressions. For *first*, the holiness of his doctrine, which overthrows the Devils kingdom and authority, plainly shows how much he was in the favour of God. And secondly, his conquests over the Devil when he assaulted him with his temptations, his turning him out of his possession every where, and making him acknowledge his authority, is an evident token how much superiour he was to him, and so not obnoxious to his abuses. And *thirdly*, they who had been the followers of *Jesus*, but a little while, were too strong for the Devil, and much above his power to hurt them: and therefore how could he himself be touched by him. They are S. *John*'s words in this Epistle, ii. 14. *I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.* And again, the further his doctrine was propagated, the more was the kingdom of the Devil overthrown, and all his cheats detected and discovered. As all impiety was plucked up by the roots, and godliness planted in the room of it: so all superstitious devices, all Magick, all Divination, wherewith he had long gull'd and couzened the World and kept them in Idolatry, were laid

laid ſo naked and bare, that they were aſhamed, and preſently vaniſhed. There is an excellent diſcourſe concerning this in *Athanaſius* his Book, concerning *the Incarnation of the Word*; which muſt not here be entirely tranſcribed, but only theſe few words of it. Τίς ἦν ἄρα καὶ πηλίκος ἐστὶν οὗτος "ὁ Χριστός; Who then, let it be conſi- "dered, and how great is this CHRIST? "who by his name and preſence obſcures "and aboliſhes all things every where; "and alone prevails over all, and fills the "whole world with his Diſcipline? Let "the *Gentiles* that bluſh not to deride and "laugh at us, tell me, whether He be a "mere man who does theſe things. If he "be, why do they not bluſh to ſee one "man ſtronger than all their Gods? How "comes he to demonſtrate by his power, "that they are nothing? But if they will "call him a Magician, let them tell me "again how it comes to paſs that he de- "ſtroys all Magick, and doth not rather "eſtabliſh it?

He that can fancy all that I have now mentioned to have been done by the Devil, which was ſo much to his prejudice; muſt, one would think, be poſſeſſed with ſome evil Spirit himſelf. There is nothing

can declare a man not to be deceived by the Devil, if this will not; that He is the very perſon who lays open all the Devils frauds, and diſcovers his wiles, and delivers men from all his ſubtil impoſtures. So did our Saviour; and therefore we may conclude that as he believed his doctrine even concerning himſelf, to be true, ſo that was true which he believed: and that he was not deluded, either by his own private Spirit, or by any elſe. And the truth is, his Adverſaries never took him for a vain Enthuſiaſt, or for a man that was ignorantly deceived; but ſtill they accuſe him as a ſubtil Impoſtor, and would fain have had it thought, that he craftily invented what he preached, to deſtroy their credit, and eſtabliſh his own. But this I have ſhown is incredible: For who could imagine that he ſhould gain any credit and reputation by being put to death upon a ſhameful croſs; into which he was not enſnared by their cunning, but foreſaw and frequently foretold, and voluntarily offered himſelf to ſuffer it? Allow him but to be a man of common ſenſe, and you muſt think he would not have contrived this way to procure fame, and to propagate his doctrine in the world: unleſs he had verily thought it to be ſo true, that

his

his Croſs, which proved the laughter of the *Gentiles*, and the ſtumbling-block of the *Jews*, could not hinder him from being honoured in the World as the Son of God. Nothing elſe could make him chuſe to die on this manner, but his ſincere belief of what he preached: and there being no cauſe in the world to ſuſpect any thing of a melancholy proud imagination, or a diabolical illuſion that ſhould impoſe upon him ſuch a belief; it remains that our Saviour by his very death proved and confirmed the truth of what he preached. He firſt came by WATER and then he came by BLOUD. And as his BLOUD proves he did not abuſe us, with that which he knew to be falſe; ſo the WATER, his holy Doctrine and Life proves that he had no flaw in his underſtanding, nor was abuſed himſelf with any fancies or illuſions, when he took himſelf to be ſo certainly the Son of God, that he ſealed it with his precious BLOUD.

XI. And it ought to be conſidered alſo, that it was propheſied before by the holy men of God, that their CHRIST ſhould ſuffer, and be deſpiſed of men, and be in nothing more remarkable than in his ſorrows. And therefore his BLOUD was

a ſign to thoſe who believed thoſe prophecies, that *Jeſus* was the CHRIST, eſpecially his bloud ſo diſgracefully ſhed; becauſe He appeared hereby, as well as by other marks, to be the perſon, whom all their inſpired men pointed at and foretold ſhould come to be their King. For the deſcriptions they have left of the cruel uſage and horrible ſufferings of the *Meſſiah* or Chriſt, were anſwered to the life, and exactly fulfilled in our Saviour *Jeſus*, whoſe *torments* rather exceeded than fell ſhort of the tragicalneſs of all their expreſſions. Thence it is that when He had ended all his ſufferings, he ſaid, xix. *John* 30. IT IS FINISHED: and ſo *bowed his head* (*i. e.* did reverence to God) *and gave up the ghoſt*, *i. e.* reſigned his Spirit to God in that prayer which S. *Luke* mentions. By which words [*It is finiſhed*] He bad them mark that now all things that were written of him in the xxii. *Pſalm*, liii. *Iſaiah*, and other places of their holy Books, were perfectly fulfilled, and received ſuch a punctual completion in him, that there remained nothing more to be done, but only to die. He had done all his Fathers will, and finiſhed his whole work in every point, and ſo, having no further buſineſs here, He worſhipped God that

ſent

ſent him, and departed the world to go to him.

XII. It will alſo much advantage this diſcourſe to obſerve the accidents that happned at our Saviour's death, and accompanied his bloud-ſhedding; which have no ſmall force to verifie what he ſaid concerning himſelf. And to omit the death of *Judas* which prevented our Lord's, and declared that he thought *Jeſus* innocent, and himſelf guilty; together with ſeveral other things which may be better mentioned afterward; let us only obſerve how the Sun contrary to its uſual courſe, when the Moon could not interpoſe it ſelf between its light and them, was eclipſed three whole hours, as he was in his paſſion, xxiii. *Luke* 44, 45. And that in the concluſion of it, *the veil of the Temple* (of that Temple wherein the *Jews* ſo much confided) *was rent in twain from the top to the bottom,* xxvii. Matth. 51. *The Earth quaked, the Rocks rent, and the Graves were opened, and many bodies of Saints which ſlept aroſe, and went out of the Graves after his Reſurrection, and appeared unto many in the holy City, ver.* 52, 53. What judgment can any ſober man make of ſo many ſtrange things concurring at this

this moment? When was it ever heard that the Sun bluſht, as one may ſay, to ſhow its face, and look upon him; when any malefactor or innocent man either was hang'd upon a gibbet? or that the holy place was torn, together with that man's body? or that the Earth groaned when he expired? and the hearts of Rocks trembled when he cried out, and the monuments of the dead opened at his death, which three days after gave them life? All theſe things were peculiar to the death of *Jeſus*, and never met together but only to honour his bloud. And ſo notorious they were, that the *Centurion* and thoſe who under him had the charge at that time to ſee the execution done, were convinced by them and by the words that he ſpake, that he was no Deceiver, but in truth the Son of God.

So S. *Matthew* there relates, *ver.* 54. that *when the Centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jeſus, ſaw the Earthquake, and thoſe things that were done, they feared greatly, ſaying, Truly this man was the Son of God.* Whatſoever the *Jews* had decreed, they ſaw by the diſpleaſure of the Heavens, by the trembling of the Earth, by the hand of God upon the Temple

Temple (which was ſoon known by the Prieſts) that *Jeſus* had exceeding great wrong done him; having ſpoken nothing but the truth, when he confeſſed to *Pilate*, that he was the Son of God. They dreaded to think what would be the conſequences of this horrid murder; and were ſorely afraid that they themſelves, who had attended upon it, ſhould feel ſome of thoſe tokens of Gods wrath, which elſewhere was very viſible. But S. *Mark* tells us that the *Centurion* alſo obſerved the words of our Saviour, as well as was ſtruck with theſe miraculous accidents, and that they helped to convince him, xv. 39. *And when the Centurion which ſtood over againſt him, ſaw that he ſo cried out, and gave up the ghoſt, he ſaid, Truly this man was the Son of God.* That is, when he heard him call God FATHER (for thoſe were the words, as you heard out of S. *Luke* xxiii. 46. which he cried with a loud voice at the giving up of the ghoſt, *Father into thy hands I commend my Spirit*) and when he ſaw that he ſtood in this to the very laſt breath that God was his *Father*, and alſo beheld ſuch ſtrange teſtimonies of it, both in the Heaven and in the Earth, he ſaid without all doubt he ought to have been acknowledged to be

be no less than he said, and not crucified as a malefactor. And S. *Luke* relates it thus, that *Jesus* crying with a loud voice, and saying those words before mentioned, *The Centurion saw what was done* (that is, all spoken of in the precedent verses, xxiii. *Luke* 44, 45, 46.) *and* GLORIFIED *God saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.* "Which was as if he had said, God be "praised for showing us the truth, or let "us do God honour in acknowledging the "truth, whatever come of it; I make no "question but this man was innocent, and "said true when he affirmed he was God's "Son; though the *Jews* have got him "crucified for this saying, and brought us "to wait upon his execution.

That, as I have often noted, was their quarrel with him, *That he being a man made himself equal with God,* x. *John* 33. v. 18. This was the blasphemy they accused him of, that he said, *They should see the* SON OF MAN (that is, Himself) *sitting at the right hand of power.* But the *Centurion*, an honest *Gentile*, acquitted him of this crime; and seeing the things that were done, and hearing the words he uttered, concluded him to be *Righteous*, free from all blame, and not at all

all guilty of that blaſphemy for which he was arraigned and ſuffered: but ought to have been believed and acknowledged as the CHRIST, the Son of the bleſſed. Thus was that fulfilled which our Saviour had foretold, viii. *John* 28. *When ye have lift up the Son of Man* (upon the Croſs) *then ſhall ye know that I am He,* (that is, *the CHRIST*) *and that I do nothing of my ſelf,* (aſſume not this authority of preaching thus without Gods leave) *but as my Father hath taught me, I ſpeak theſe things*; that is, even this that I am his CHRIST is that which he bid me affirm. *And he that ſent me is with me* (to juſtifie what I ſay and do) *the Father hath not left me alone*: (no not upon the Croſs, nor after death, as appears even by this Teſtimony which he forced the *Centurion* to give him) *For I do always thoſe things that pleaſe him.* Keep to my office, that is, both now, and when I ſuffer you to *lift me up* to the Croſs; for God declared that he was never better *pleaſed* with him, than when he laid down his life in this manner, to teſtifie to the truth.

XIII. Which was very much juſtified likewiſe by all that paſſed before this, from the time that the *Sanhedrim* had judged

ed him worthy of death. In the whole proceſs againſt him, before his condemnation to the Croſs, there were the plaineſt marks of his innocence: and it may juſtly be reputed a notable teſtimony to him, that their very charge againſt him, cleared him; and that he who gave judgment upon him, declared all along he did not deſerve it. Which will make it worthy our conſideration, I think, if I give you as brief a relation as I can of all thoſe paſſages which were preparatory to his Bloudy death, after the Chief Prieſts had *bound him and led him away and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the Governour of Judea.* Who, as ſoon as he had examined him whether he was *the King of the Jews,* and received our Saviours anſwer, that he was, xxvii. *Matth.* 11. preſently diſcerned that it was no Earthly Kingdom (as the *Jews* would have had him believe) to which he pretended, and that he did not at all intend to intrench upon the *Roman* rights: as you may ſee evidently if you mind what follows this in S. *Luke* xxiii. 4. *Then ſaid Pilate to the Chief Prieſts, and to the people, I find no fault in this man.* This netled them very much to hear *him* pronounced innocent, whom they had judged guilty of the higheſt crime, and therefore they

they began with more than ordinary fierceneſs to endeavour to make good their charge; and ſaid *he ſtirred up the people* (to ſedition, which was an argument, had it been true, that he affected a Kingdom in this world which would have been prejudicial to *Cæſar*) *teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to Jeruſalem, ver.* 5. But *Pilate* ſo little believed that his Doctrine tended to the raiſing ſedition, that, to be rid of any further trouble, he lays hold on that word *Galilee*, where they told him he began to preach, and ſent him to *Herod* the Tetrarch of that Country, who was at that time at *Jeruſalem, ver.* 6, 7. But he was ſoon weary of the buſineſs, and remitted him back to *Pilate, arrayed in a gorgeous robe, ver.* 10, 11. as much as to ſay that he could determine nothing, but that he was a ridiculous Monarch, a mock-King, nothing elſe.

Being returned to *Pilate*, He received from him many teſtimonies of his innocence (notwithſtanding that he affirmed he was a KING) and *Pilate* deviſed by ſundry means to deliver him, becauſe as he told them, neither He nor *Herod* could find any fault in him, which ſhould make

him worthy of death, xxiii. *Luke* 13, 14, 15. *Firſt* of all, he gives them their choice (but plainly ſhowed that his inclinations were to diſmiſs *Jeſus*) whether he ſhould releaſe him, or a notorious villain, who had committed murder in an inſurrection, *ver.* 17, 18, &c. And when they moſt ungratefully preferred that ſeditious murderer before him who had given life to ſo many among them, *Pilate* was diſpoſed ſtill to favour him, by reaſon of an admonition he received from his wife (at this very inſtant, when he was ſet down again in the Judgment-ſeat) to have nothing to do in the condemnation of ſo righteous a perſon; for ſhe had *ſuffered ſo many things*, and been diſturbed with ſuch troubleſome thoughts in her ſleep about him, that ſhe was confident he would ſuffer much if he were guilty of his death, xxvii. *Matth.* 19. This ſtartled him ſo much, that he laboured more than before to ſet him at liberty. He asked *them* indeed, which was unbecoming a Judge, *what he ſhould do with Jeſus which is called CHRIST* (*ver.* 22.) as if his accuſers, not He, were to determine his puniſhment: But yet he askt them again and again, no leſs than three times, *Why, what evil hath he done?* for he proteſted he found no cauſe

cauſe of death in him, xxvii. *Matth.* 23. xxiii. *Luke* 22. In which laſt place, you may read, that having declared his innocence, he next of all contrived how to appeaſe their blind rage, only by giving him the chaſtiſement of ſcourging. Which S. *John* tells us was beſtowed on him, xix. *John* 1. and that the ſouldiers alſo added ſome ridiculous enſigns of royalty, which they put upon him to expoſe him to the greater ſcorn, and made a mock-proclamation, ſaying, *Hail King of the Jews, ver.* 2, 3. This *Pilate* imagined would have given ſatisfaction to their wrath; and *therefore went forth again* (*ver.* 4.) to let them *know that he found no fault in him.* But they might ſee that he had rendred him ſo contemptible, that no body hereafter would follow him as their King. For he brought him forth in that ridiculous dreſs into which the ſouldiers had put him (*ver.* 5.) and bid them look upon him, whether he was not deſpicable enough. That ſeems to be the meaning of thoſe words that follow, *Behold the man.* See what a poor deſpicable perſon they have made him. You need not fear that ſuch a man will do you any harm; for there is nothing of royal Majeſty in him, more than this which you laugh at.

But they would not be content with this contempt which was put upon him; their malice was implacable, and nothing would ſuffice them but to have him crucified. Which at the inſtigation of the Prieſts, was demanded by the rabble, who bawled as loud as ever they could, *ſaying, Crucifie him, crucifie him, ver.* 6. As much as to ſay, Go on ſir, thou haſt begun well, proceed to finiſh the execution. For *ſcourging* uſed to go before *Crucifixion,* as S. *Hierom* obſerves upon xxvii. of S. *Matthew. It was appointed by the Roman Laws, that they who were crucified ſhould firſt be ſcourged.* The *Jews* themſelves who were taken in the ſiege of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus* (five hundred commonly every day, ſometimes more) were firſt miſerably laſht, and as it were, crucified before-hand with great torments, and then faſtned to a croſs over againſt the wall of the City, as *Joſephus* * relates in his Book of the *Jewiſh* war. By a juſt judgment of God they themſelves ſuffered that from the *Romans,* which they had made our Saviour ſuffer unjuſtly by the ſame hands. For they never left their yelling againſt him, and beſeeching the Governour not to leave off thus; till *Pilate* bid

* *Lib. 6. c.* 12.

bid them do the reſt themſelves if they would, for he had rather it ſhould be their act than his: *Take ye him, ſaith he, and crucifie him; for I find no fault in him, ver.* 6. One would think that the very manner of this ſpeech was a ſufficient declaration of the Governours mind; beſide that he again repeats it, that he ſaw no pretence for the putting him to death. But yet they continue to preſs him with an obſtinate violence to gratifie their deſires. And ſince they ſaw there was no good to be done, as we ſay, in this way wherein they had hitherto proſecuted him; they form a new endictment againſt him: and tell *Pilate* (*ver.* 7.) that if he could not find him guilty of death, according to the *Roman* Laws, yet *by their Law he ought to die, becauſe he made himſelf the Son of God.*

This was to make a new Proceſs againſt him, and to forſake the former endictment, which accuſed him of Treaſon againſt *Cæſar*. Now they make him guilty of Treaſon againſt Almighty God, and ſeem to lay hold of a Licence which *Pilate* had given them before, xviii. *John* 31. to *take him and judge him according to their Law*, which pronounced the ſentence of

death upon him. But, as they add there, they had no power remaining among them to execute ſuch a ſentence: and therefore implore his favour to help them out, and to *puniſh* capitally this high crime of blaſphemy, which, as things ſtood, they could only *condemn*. And though they might be willing enough to underſtand his words juſt now ſpoken (when he ſaid, *Take ye him, and crucifie him*) to be really meant for an enlargement of his former grant, and to give them liberty to execute their own ſentence: yet it was more than they could do, they muſt be beholden to his power for it. They were extremely deſirous, it appears by the ſtory, to have him crucified, for his greater diſgrace; but this was a puniſhment proper only to the *Gentiles*, and never uſed among the *Jews*: and therefore that they might neither act againſt the cuſtoms of their Country, nor yet let him eſcape that ignominious puniſhment, they continue to beg of *Pilate* that he would pronounce the ſentence of crucifixion upon him, and then command his ſouldiers to ſee it executed; for ſaying that he was *the Son of God*.

When *Pilate* therefore heard this (xix. *John* 8.) that he called himſelf the *Son of God*

God (which the *Jews* took for blaſphemy) it put him into a greater fear than ever. He imagining, I ſuppoſe, according to the opinion of the *Gentiles*, that he might poſſibly be ſome Son of *Jupiter* or *Apollo*, or ſome other of their Deities. And therefore he went back again into the Palace (*ver.* 9.) and askt our Saviour, *Whence art thou?* To which our Saviour replied nothing: either becauſe he was unworthy to hear, or uncapable to underſtand ſo weighty a Truth. This put him into ſome indignation, for he asked him again with arrogance enough (*ver.* 10.) *Doſt thou not ſpeak to me? knoweſt thou not who I am? and that I have power either to crucifie thee, or releaſe thee,* which I pleaſe? To which he received ſuch an anſwer (*ver.* 11.) as ſatisfied him, that whatſoever power he had, he ſhould abuſe it, though not ſo much as the *Jews* did theirs, if he imployed it to his condemnation. For *from thenceforth* (*ver.* 12.) he laboured more than before to releaſe *him*, whoſe innocence, modeſty, conſtancy, and contempt of death were ſo apparent. But being told that if he did, it would be in effect to declare himſelf *Cæſars* enemy, as you read in the ſame verſe; He had not the courage to befriend our Saviour any longer,

but reſolves at laſt to ſacrifice him to their rage, that he might ſave himſelf. For the very ſuſpicion of a crime, he knew, had been the ruine of divers perſons with *Tiberius*; who would not want informers, he imagined, of what was now ſaid. He thought it better therefore by the condemnation of an innocent perſon (ſuch are the counſels of worldly wiſdom) to preſerve his intereſt in the Emperor, and in the *Jews*, and perchance prevent a popular tumult, than hazard the loſs of their favour and of the publick peace, by preſerving one who was poor and mean, and for whoſe death he was not like to be called to any account, nor incur any danger.

But yet (ſo pure and free from all ſpot was this Lamb of God) he would not pronounce the ſentence againſt him, till he had firſt, in as publick a manner, pronounced him innocent, and waſhed his hands of his bloud. For *he took water*, ſays S. *Matthew* xxvii. 24. *and waſhed his hands before the multitude, ſaying, I am innocent of the bloud of this juſt perſon; ſee ye to it.* This very WATER, as well as the other, I have mentioned, was a witneſs to *Jeſus*, that his very Judge thought him

him guiltleſs, though he had openly confeſſed himſelf to be the Son of God. If it had been left to his free choice, he ſhould have been acquitted, even by him that condemned him: He had ſuch a regret in his mind, at that very time when he brought him forth to paſs the ſentence upon him, that he tries again if he could move thoſe obdurate hearts from their cruel reſolution; ſaying, (xix. *John* 13, 14.) *Behold your King.* That is, ſay what you will, this is your King, whom I am going, becauſe you will not elſe be ſatisfied, to condemn. Or elſe, this is ſpoken by way of upbraiding and deriſion, that they ſhould make ſuch a-do about ſo poor a man as this; who had no power to do any harm if he had a mind. Why ſhould they deſire ſo eagerly and impatiently to be rid of him? If he was their King, how could they anſwer it? if he were not, what hurt could he do? But the former ſeems to be the ſence of his words: for the *Jews* turned away their heads, and *cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucifie him, ver.* 15. As much as to ſay, This is none of our King, we have nothing to do with him: And therefore they would not have him trouble himſelf about their affairs any further, than only to order him

to

to be crucified. Let him not be ſo much concerned for them, or for their King; they would look to themſelves (as he had bidden them) and be content to bear all the blame, if their King were crucified. They did not deſire any of the guilt ſhould light upon him. No, for their part they declare they will perfectly acquit him, and take all upon themſelves and theirs. So *all the People anſwered and ſaid, His blood be on us, and on our Children:* xxvii. Matth. 25.

And yet, as if he would vie with them in pertinacious reſolution (ſo ſenſible he was of his innocence) he deſires them once more, to conſider of the buſineſs, and not thus raſhly deſtroy him whom they ought to preſerve. What, ſays he, *Shall I crucifie your King?* xix. Joh. 15. To which the chief Prieſts immediately returned ſuch an anſwer as ſtopt his mouth, and made him not dare to ſpeak one word more in his behalf. And indeed it is a great wonder he had ſaid ſo much, conſidering his natural diſpoſition; which, if we may believe *Philo**, was ſo fierce and cruel, that he little regarded any body; or cared what crimes he committed. Strange! that he ſhould be ſo nice and tender in this point:

* *Legation. ad Caium.*

So

So extremely unwilling to paſs ſentence on our Saviour (a Man that had not one friend appeared for him) that nothing could make him do it, till they reminded him of his duty to his Maſter, ſaying, *We have* (i. e. acknowledge) *no King but Cæſar. Then*, as it follows in the very next words, verſ. 16. *delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified.* When he heard they ſtill obſtinately pretended reſpect to *Cæſar*, and would have *him* to be concerned in the caſe; he thought it was time to make an end, and give ſentence that their new King ſhould be crucified. For this at laſt was the crime, for which he muſt ſuffer, verſ. 19. *Pilate wrote a title* (ſhowing the cauſe of his death) *and put it on the Croſs. And the Writing was*, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Which *Pilate* knew was falſe, in the ſence wherein they meant it, a King oppoſite to *Cæſar*: and therefore the words were ſo contrived that he might ſtill expreſs the opinion he had of him, and yet ſatisfie *Cæſar* too. To the very laſt he would give teſtimony to the innocence of *Jeſus*, as far as he durſt: and even then proclaimed him their King in ſeveral Languages (an Omen of the proclaiming it ſhortly in all Countries) to their everlaſting reproach; when he hung

hung upon an infamous Gibbet. And therefore they were not yet ſatisfied; becauſe they ſaw themſelves plainly indited by this Title, in the face of the World; as the Murderers of their KING. Which made them renew their Petitions to *Pilate* that he would alter the Inſcription; and not write *The King of the Jews, but that he ſaid, I am King of the Jews*, verſ. 21. But now *Pilate* grew as obſtinate as they, and gave them this ſhort anſwer, verſ. 22. *What I have written, I have written.* That is, content your ſelves; for the firſt writing ſhall ſtand, let the World make what they can of it. And there is no queſtion but there was a Divine Providence in the buſineſs, that the cauſe of his death ſhould be ſo expreſſed, as that the *Jews* ſhould be openly condemned and *Jeſus* ſtill cleared by *Pilate*; even after he had not only given ſentence againſt him, but ordered it to be put in execution. All things concurred to juſtifie him when his BLOUD was ſhed. Which this very Title declared was upon this account, to teſtifie that he was *their KING:* and told the World withall, that in the judgment of him who was his Judge, He was no deceiver, when he affirmed that he was *their KING*; but the *Jews*, villainous Traytors, who had crucified

fied that Perſon whom they ought to have honoured and obeyed.

XIV. For which the terrible vengeance of God followed them; and never left them till they had their own wiſh. His BLOUD was required at their hands, and at the hands of their Poſterity. For they never thrive from that time forward: but declined more and more, till about Forty Years after, their City was beſieged by thoſe whom they had importuned to crucify our Saviour; multitudes of them were crucified (as I told you before) in the face of all their Brethren; far greater numbers were famiſht; *Jeruſalem* and the Temple at laſt deſtroyed; the People of the Nation baniſhed; and their Children became Vagabonds, even to this day. For it was not very long, before thoſe very Men, who (when they ſaid thoſe words, *We have no King, but Cæſar*) in the ſame breath had for ever renounced their CHRIST, and pronounced themſelves Rebels, if they were not obedient to *Cæſar*; took up arms to deliver themſelves from their ſubjection to him, whom they really hated, though, now, to ſerve a turn, they courted and flattered. They who had rejected their *true CHRIST* and KING by whom they might have

have been restored to true liberty, were ready upon all occasions to run after those *false* CHRISTS (of whom our Saviour propheſied, xxiv. *Matth.* 5. 24.) who by the promiſes of a falſe liberty, led them into perdition. They could never be quiet till they had undone themſelves, by provoking the only King whom they pretended to reverence, to be the Inſtrument of our Saviour, to make them the vileſt ſlaves, and the moſt miſerable wretches upon the face of the Earth. S. *John* lived to ſee the day of Jeſus his COMING WITH POWER to execute Judgment upon them; and we ſee their wiſh ſtill more and more accompliſhed upon their Children. Who, as they never yet ſolemnly indeavoured to wipe off the guilt of his BLOUD from them, by acknowledging the crime of their Fore-fathers (as the manner of former times was, we ſee in the examples of *Nehemiah*, and *Daniel*) ſo they continue to taſte of the bitter fruits of this execrable Treaſon againſt their Soveraign Lord and King, CHRIST JESUS. By which you may ſee, that his BLOUD both upon the *Croſs* and upon their *Heads* (by the heavy guilt it loaded them withall) is very fitly here alledged by S. *John*, as a great WITNESS that He was ſent of God as his *only Son.*

Son. For *Pontius Pilate* himself did not wholly escape, but some of it lighted also upon his Head. Though he was not so guilty, our Saviour confessed, as they who pursued him out of hatred, whereas he having no unkindness for him, delivered him to be crucified, only out of fear: yet he felt the weight of this crime, and was oppressed himself, as our Saviour had been, by false accusations which the *Samaritans* brought against him. Whereupon he was deprived of the Government of *Judæa* by *Vitellius* then President of *Syria*. And having lost the authority, which he abused in condemning our Saviour; he was required to go to *Rome*, and there answer the crimes that should be objected to him. There indeed he found *Tiberius* dead; but he did not live long after him. For he fell into so distressed a condition, that, about the third year of the succeeding Emperor *Caius*, ἐξ ἀνάγκης (as *Eusebius* his word is*) he was constrained, either by the grievous afflictions he endured, or by the command of *Cæsar* (which was an usual thing) to become his own Executioner, and punish himself with Death for all the crimes he had committed.

* L. 11. *Hist. Eccl.* c. 7.

But

But I ſhall not purſue either his or their ſtory any further; it being time to put an end to this Argument, which I ſhall conclude with theſe *Two* obſervations.

1. *Firſt,* That after our Saviour was dead, one of the ſouldiers pierced his ſide with his ſpear, *and forthwith came thereout WATER and BLOUD,* as this very Apoſtle hath recorded in the Chapter ſo often mentioned, xix. *John* 34. Now ſome have from hence imagined, that he being the only Evangeliſt that takes any notice of this, and ſetting a particular remark upon it, as a thing that *he ſaw and bears witneſs of, ver.* 35. it is moſt likely he hath ſome reſpect to that paſſage in his Goſpel, and to the *Water* and *Bloud* there mentioned, when he ſpeaks of the witneſs of WATER and BLOUD here in this Epiſtle. For the Water and Bloud which flowed out of his ſide, were an argument of the truth of his humanity, which ſome wild Hereticks then denied, and teſtified alſo that he was truly dead, and not merely in appearance.

But it muſt be obſerved that S. *John* is not here proving *Jeſus* Chriſt to be a true man,

man, conſiſting of Body and Soul like ours, and that this Body and Soul were ſo ſeparated, that he was really dead: but ſomething far greater and more excellent, *viz.* that he was God's Son: which the *Water* and *Bloud* that came out of his ſide were no competent argument to prove. That *Water* and *Bloud* therefore, if they have any relation to theſe *Witneſſes* here mentioned, were only emblems and adumbrations of theſe two grand Proofs of our Saviours being the CHRIST, *viz.* his PURITY and innocence which appeared in his whole preaching and life, to which the *Water* bears a reſemblance; and his conſtant confeſſion of the truth even unto the DEATH, which was livelly repreſented by that *Bloud.* Theſe two flowed from him with ſuch force, that they have overſpread the world with his Faith; and *the knowledge of the glory of the Lord hath covered the Earth, even like to the waters which cover the Sea.*

2. The *ſecond* Obſervation is, That they who by apoſtaſie from the Faith of *Jeſus*, denied him to be *the CHRIST* after they had acknowledged it, are ſaid to *tread under foot the Son of God*, and to *count his BLOUD an unholy thing*, x. *Heb.* 29.

Which expression could not be justified, if the Apostles had not lookt upon his *Bloud* as an unreproveable Witness to him. For the meaning is, that those men who fell back to their old Religion again, and deserted Christianity, made nothing of the Testimony which God had given of his Son. As for his *Resurrection* they did not give any credit to that, though so strongly attested, but *TROD UNDER FOOT the Son of God*, as if he lay still in his grave: and as for his *Bloud* which was shed at his *Death*, they look'd upon that as if it were but COMMON BLOUD (so the word UNHOLY may be taken) or rather as if it were the *bloud* of a malefactor, which may be properly called *impure* and *unholy*. Which is the reason that he says they shall be judged worthy of *sore punishment* than the contemners of *Moses*; because these men in effect made *Jesus* (who was infinitely greater than He) to be a mere Impostor, a false Prophet, and a Blasphemer, who had done things worthy of the vilest death. They justified those that murdered him, and *crucified the Son of God afresh* (as it is in a parallel place, vi. *Hebr.* 6.) by disowning him and denying that he was *the CHRIST*. For this was to acknowledge that he was justly

put

put to death, for taking upon him that office: and that if he were upon Earth again, they ſaw no reaſon why they ſhould not treat him, as the *Jews* had done. This was the ſence of every Chriſtians apoſtaſie; it renewed the charge of impoſture againſt *Jeſus*, and *put him*, as the Apoſtle there ſpeaks, *to open ſhame*. They did as bad as publickly declare him to be a deceiver; and that he deſerved to loſe his life in that infamous manner wherein he ſuffered upon the Croſs. For which cauſe ſuch vilifiers of *Jeſus* deſerved to partake in that *judgment and fiery indignation*, which he ſays was ready *to devour the adverſaries* (*ver.* 27.) that is, thoſe who actually crucified Chriſt, and now perſecuted his ſervants: for they had his *BLOUD* in the ſame contempt, and made no more of it, than of the bloud of one of the Thieves that were crucified with him.

Now from hence it follows that his BLOUD teſtified his innocence (as I have ſhown) and was look'd upon by others as well as by S. *John* to be a witneſs that he was the Son of God. Elſe they could not have been guilty of ſo great a crime, and faln under ſuch an heavy pu-

niſhment, who deſpiſed his *Bloud*, and were no more moved by it than if it had been common, like the bloud of other men; nay, relinquiſhed him, as if his bloud had been profane, like that of the malefactors who ſuffered with him. This was their condemnation, that they caſt ſuch a vile reflection on that bloud, which heretofore they thought ſo powerful, that *thereby they were SANCTIFIED*; that is, perſwaded to devote themſelves to his ſervice, as the only means to obtain remiſſion of their ſins, which they had by his Bloud. This is a ſign that they look'd upon it once, not only as a thing *moſt ſacred*, but alſo moſt *powerful* to make men believe in *Jeſus*. And this increaſed the ſin and guilt of diſhonouring his Bloud by Apoſtaſie; becauſe it was of great authority and force to draw men to the Faith, and to preſerve them in it: which, by forſaking the Faith it confirmed, they made to be of no efficacy, nor conſideration at all.

Moſes his Covenant and Law were ſealed only *by the bloud of Bulls and Goats*, and yet thoſe men ſuffered death without mercy, as the Apoſtle here obſerves, who either fell away to other gods, or did any thing preſumptuouſly in contempt of his precepts.

precepts. By which we may judge, ſays he, what they are like to ſuffer (a much ſorer puniſhment ſure) who renounce the Chriſtian Religion, which was confirmed by a much greater perſon, and by a more noble bloud, even by the bloud of the Mediator of this better Covenant. Who did more than *Moſes* ever thought of to atteſt what he delivered, and to prove that he came from God, and that all his promiſes ſhould be made good (for he ſealed them with his own bloud) and therefore might juſtly expect that men ſhould prove more faithful to him, and remain firmer in his obedience; at leaſt not be ſo preſumptuous as to deſpiſe him by reproaching his precious Bloud. Now if his *Bloud* was not an argument to induce men to believe, and to continue in the ſtate of Chriſtianity; they could not be charged with ſuch diſreſpect to it, when they left this Religion, nor be puniſhed for the undervaluing or rather ſcorning that which was of no force to tye them to the Faith. But if they were guilty of great contempt of it, and were to ſuffer ſorely, extream ſorely upon this account, that they gave no more reverence to his bloud, then we ought to conclude the Apoſtles thought it of great efficacy to en-

gage their belief, and make them constantly adhere to Christ, by the witness that it bare to him. Which testimony, together with the rest, those apostates plainly rejecting, they became liable to a far heavier condemnation than any formerly could fall into, for affronting *Christ*, and all those who were his *Witnesses*. In short, they who did not look upon his blood as *Holy*, must condemn him for a Malefactor. But they that did confess the sacredness of it (which appears many ways) must needs acknowledge him not to have been a Criminal, as the *Jews* pretended, but, the *Son of God*, as at his death he professed himself.

A Prayer.

I DO again acknowledge thee, O blessed Jesus, *to be the Son of God most High. I behold thy Glory shining through the blackest cloud of thy shameful sufferings. Then thou appearedst to be the chosen of God, even when thou wast scorned and rejected of men. Great was the splendour of thy Majesty, under the mockery*

mockery of a Crown of Thorns, and under the reproach of the Cross it self. And great was thy Love, *O thou Lover of Souls, who wouldst shed thy own most precious Bloud to work and confirm thy* Faith *in our hearts, that believing on thee, we might have life through thy Name. O how expensive was thy* Love, *which never thought it had done enough, till thou hadst assured our hearts, by giving thy self for us! How infinitely are we indebted to thee, who hast so dearly purchased our eternal joy, with thy most bitter sorrows! I ought to have the greater regard to all that thou hast said, either concerning thy self, or concerning the obedience I owe thee, or the happiness thou hast promised me; because thou hast sealed all in so sacred a manner, and chosen to die that thou mightest bear witness to thy Truth.*

For this end thou camest into the world, and hast honoured thy self with the Name of the True and faithful witness, the beginning of the Creation of God; *who hast shown us the path of life, by thy bloudy and most ignominious death. O that none of us who are called by thy Name may ever prove so base and unworthy, so ungrateful and disrespectful to thee, so insensible or forgetful of thine amazing goodness, as to forsake that*

courſe which thou thy ſelf haſt begun, and into which thou haſt led us by thine own example. Let none of us prove unlike thee who art the beginner and the finiſher of our Faith. *Let us never degenerate from the Original from whence we come; nor diſhonour the very Author of what we are, by actions unworthy of his children. But be pleaſed graciouſly both to excite and aſſiſt our pious endeavours to follow thee, and to witneſs a good confeſſion, as thou haſt done, at leaſt in our lives and converſation. That they may teſtifie to all how much we reverence thee, by our obſervance of thy commands; and juſtifie the truth of thy Word, that thy yoke is eaſie and thy burden light, by our chearful, free and ready obſervance of them. And if thou wilt have us to witneſs a good confeſſion alſo by our bloud, or by parting with any thing that is as dear unto us, for thy names ſake; O that we may then imitate thee, the true and faithful witneſs, by continuing faithful to thee unto death. Let no Soul of us ever faint in our mind, much leſs draw back for fear of any thing that may befall us: But ſtill go on, and courageouſly meet whatſoever oppoſes us in our way to Heaven. Help us to* ſtand faſt in the Faith, *to* quit our ſelves like men, *and* to be ſtrong, *as becomes thy faithful ſervants and ſouldiers, who have vowed to be true to thee unto our lives end.*

O Bleſſed Jeſus, *who can think that he does or endures too much for thee? Who can complain of thy ſervice, or repine at the ſufferings it may require? When he thinks of thy labour and pains to ſecure our hope in God of an eternal redemption from all miſeries and troubles, and from all ſin the cauſe of them, by ſhedding thy own moſt holy bloud? We are unworthy to bear the Name of thy ſervants, if we ſhould be ſo ungrateful to thy memory, as not to celebrate that love with perpetual praiſes and thankſgivings. And how fearfully ſhall we reproach our ſelves if we continue to commemorate it, and yet grudge to deny any thing for thy ſake, or behave our ſelves as if we would renew thy ſufferings by our continued ſins? Far be it from any of us to think any thing ſo dear to us as Truth and Righteouſneſs; that holy Truth which thou haſt delivered to us. O that we may read with ſuch an affection the whole hiſtory of thy love, and all the Laws thou haſt left to govern us, and the gracious grants thou haſt made us; as if we ſaw them written in thy moſt precious bloud: By which thou haſt teſtified the greatneſs and ſincerity of thy love, and aſſured us of the truth of thy Word, and conſecrated thy ſelf alſo to be a merciful and faithful High Prieſt; who canſt have compaſſion on us, and ever*

ſuccour

succour and relieve us when we are tempted as thou wast. And may we be so sensibly affected herewith, as to depend on thy intercession with the stronger Faith; and with greater care and diligence tread in those steps which thou hast in such a manner markt out to us; and persist in them so stedfastly, that none of the terrors of this world may make us step aside, and turn from thy Commandments.

Give us grace, O Blessed Lord, in the worst condition, to express that resolution, that undaunted resolution, that constancy, that confidence in God, that Zeal for his honour and glory, that charity towards our enemies, that humble resignation, and that patient meekness, which appeared in thee under thy greatest sufferings. Arm us with the very same mind and spirit, which we see in thy self. That we who believe in a Saviour who abased and humbled himself so low, who was so content to be poor and little regarded, to bear all the slanders and scorn, as well as the cruel torments which the malice of men could inflict upon him; may not be proud and insolent, covetous and ambitious, impatient of pain, or a little disparagement: but constantly endeavouring to conform our selves to thy glorious pattern which we have before us,

may

may rejoyce in that faithful ſaying, That if we be dead with thee, we ſhall alſo live with thee; if we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with thee. *Amen.*

Now unto the faithful Witneſs, the firſt-begotten from the dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth: Unto him that loved us and waſhed us from our ſins in his own Bloud, and hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Concerning the Third *Witneſs upon Earth the SPIRIT.*

THere is one *Witneſs* more that remains ſtill to be examined, whoſe teſtimony was notorious and very well known, for it was upon the Earth; *viz.* that of the SPIRIT. In the *ſixth* verſe S. *John* brings it in after the other two, I have now treated of; though in the *eighth* Verſe it be ſet before them. And there he adds this illuſtrious character of it, which is not given to the two former, *it is the SPIRIT that beareth witneſs, becauſe the SPIRIT is the TRUTH.* Which is not to be underſtood as if the other two were not *Witneſſes*, for they are called ſo expreſly in this *eighth* Verſe; or as if they were not *truth*, for I have abundantly proved that they are: But this mark is ſet upon the SPIRIT, to denote it to be the moſt eminent

nent Witneſs of the Three. *The* witneſs, or *that* Witneſs; that which excels the other two in clearneſs and notoriouſneſs; that which was alwayes accounted moſt powerful to prove a truth; that againſt which nothing can be objected but with the greateſt impudence and impiety; that which adds greater ſtrength and force unto the other two, and together with them makes up a moſt compleat demonſtration. For whatſoever defect any one may think there is in the witneſs of the *Water* and of the *Bloud* alone; the SPIRIT perfectly ſupplies it, and proves beyond all doubt that a perſon who ſo lived and ſo dyed, muſt needs be the *Son of God.*

Now by the SPIRIT we are not to underſtand, either the deſcent of the Spirit of God upon our Saviour at his Baptiſm, or the pouring of it upon the Apoſtles on the Day of Pentecoſt, or any thing of like nature; for this was the Teſtimony of the HOLY GHOST, and that from *Heaven.* But we are to underſtand thereby *firſt* the *Miracles, Wonders* and *Signs* which were wrought by him before he dyed; and *ſecondly* his more wonderful *Reſurrection* to life again, after he was crucified, dead and buried. I will not be too con-

confident, but I think there is a plain difference, which is not obſerved, between the HOLY GHOST and the SPIRIT, in the phraſe of the New Teſtament. By the HOLY GHOST ſeems commonly to be meant, the gifts of Tongues, of Prophecy, of Knowledge, of Wiſdom, of Revelation, and ſuch like. Whereas by the SPIRIT, when it is uſed alone, or in diſtinction from the other, is generally meant, the power of Miracles, of healing Diſeaſes, caſting out Devils, feeding Multitudes with very little food, and ſuch like wonders. For we read that the *HOLY GHOST was not* given while our Saviour lived, vii. *John* 39. And yet even then the Apoſtles had the power of caſting out Devils, and healing all manner of Diſeaſes; which was a portion of that SPIRIT which our Saviour had *without meaſure*, but was not the HOLY GHOST. Thus *S. Peter* ſays our Lord was anointed with the *HOLY GHOST and with* POWER, x. Act. 38. Where by POWER is meant ſomething diſtinct from the HOLY GHOST; even that which is here called SPIRIT, a faculty of doing wonders; as the other ſignifies a faculty of knowing the heart, of declaring the mind of God, of foretelling things to come, of prophecying,

cying, and opening all the ſecrets of the Kingdom of Heaven.

And thus I am ſure it ſignifies in the Old Teſtament; where when the *SPIRIT of the Lord* is ſaid to come upon *Othniel*, iii. Judg. 9. upon *Gideon*, vi. 34. upon *Samſon*, xiii. 25. xiv. 6. (as I may have occaſion to note more largely upon another occaſion) there is nothing intended of the HOLY GHOST or any gift of declaring God's mind that was then beſtowed on them: But they were then only made valorous and couragious; and were indued with great ſtrength to atchieve wonderful things, above the power of Man. And indeed in this conſiſts one principal difference, between the HOLY GHOST and the SPIRIT; that the former conſecrated Men to the office of interpreting God's mind; but the latter did not: making them only valiant (as in thoſe three now mentioned) or fit for the Government of God's People, as in the caſe of *Saul*. All which is ſaid briefly to ſhow what we are here to underſtand by the SPIRIT, *viz.* all the wonderful things that our Lord *did*, and all that were *done* for him upon the Earth. For, whatſoever may be thought of the reſt, there is no doubt

doubt of this, that when the HOLY GHOST and the SPIRIT are thus diſtinguiſhed, as they are here by S. *John* (the one being a witneſs in *Heaven*, the other on *Earth*) SPIRIT muſt be taken in this limited and reſtrained ſignification.

I.

And firſt, I ſay, *All that he did*, as his cleanſing the poor Lepers; opening the eyes of the blind; curing of the Palſie, Bloudy-flux, and indeed all manner of ſickneſs and diſeaſe; commanding the Wind and the Sea to be obedient to him; walking upon the Water; feeding many Thouſands with a few Loaves and Fiſhes; making an hundred times more fragments than there was meat; caſting out of Devils; and raiſing of the Dead; all theſe were notable witneſſes to *Jeſus*, and hereby the SPIRIT bare record that He was the *Son of God*. The Prophet *Iſaiah* foretold that he, *being Gods beloved in whom his Soul was well pleaſed*, would appear in this manner; for God, he ſays, would *put his SPIRIT upon him*. This S. *Matthew* takes notice of, and applies to *Jeſus*, x. 18. juſt after he had cured a Man who had his hand withered: which ſhows what he un-

derstood by the SPIRIT, And our Lord himself also expounds the meaning of it in the following Verses. For after the recital of that Prophecy of *Isaiah*, the Evangelist relates immediately how He healed a Man *possessed with a Devil, blind and dumb*, vers. 22. which the *Pharisees* spitefully ascribing to the power of the Devil, and not of God, He confutes them by this argument, that then the Devil would pull down his own Kingdom. What men of sence, could imagine him to be so foolish? He was not yet so blind as the *Pharisees* were: who ought to have concluded from these miraculous works, (vers. 28.) that if he *by the SPIRIT of God cast out Devils* (as it could be by nothing else, according to the argument now named) then it was apparent *the Kingdom of God was come unto them*. Here he both tells us what the SPIRIT signifies, *viz.* such a power as this of casting out Devils; and also what was the end of giving the SPIRIT, *viz.* that they might know the *Messiah*, and his *Kingdome* was come. And whom could they take to be their KING, but he who appeared anointed with such a SPIRIT, and who communicated the same power unto others?

For

For this was an evident demonſtration, that the voice was no empty ſound which ſaid, *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*; and that it was no deception, when *John* the Baptiſt thought he ſaw the SPIRIT deſcend and remain upon him. It was plain by this, that indeed he was very dear to God, and that he had a *Divine Power* reſiding and dwelling in him; which proved him to be as great as that voice proclaimed him. That there was a mighty *Power* in him, his ſworn Enemies could not deny. The very acculation of Magick, which we find to this day in the *Jewiſh* Books, againſt him, does us this ſervice; that it is an open acknowledgment, there were ſuch miraculous things done, as are recorded in the Goſpel Story. Which being granted, it is apparent the power that wrought them was *Divine*, and that there was nothing of the Devil in the buſineſs; by our Saviours argument in the place now named. For how could the Devil be ſuppoſed to aſſiſt in ſuch operations, unleſs we will conceive him to have ſo little wit, as to contrive the moſt effectual way to overthrow all his own authority? The very end for which our Saviour diſpoſſeſſed Devils, and did all other

miraculous cures, was to win honour to God; whereas the Devil, in all that he doth, hath the quite contrary drift. If we should suppose with the Pharisees that he hath sometimes suffered himself to be commanded by his Copartners, it hath ever been with the same design, that cunning Gamesters have; who permit a meer bungler to beat them a set or two, only to draw them in to play for a greater stake. He never gives way to any of his Friends, or seems to be afraid of their authority over him, but it is to bring Men to an acknowledgment of his power; or to seduce them to the performance of some magical services to him. Whereas our Saviour demanded no other reward for all his charitable Cures, but this alone; that they whom he had thus obliged, should thank GOD, and give him glory, and sin no more.

To this purpose *Origen* admirably discourses, in the latter end of his first Book against *Celsus*. "It is senceless to think "that any of his Miracles were done by "Magick; for there never was any Ma- "gician, that called Men to the forsaking "of the Devil and all Idolatry, and per- "swaded them to amend their lives in "good

"good earneſt. They never inſtructed "them in the fear of God by all their won- "derful tricks; nor taught thoſe that ſaw "them *ſo to live, as thoſe that are to be tryed "and judged by God.* This is none of their "buſineſs. They neither can nor will "carry on ſuch a deſign; nor have any "thing to do with the amendment of "Mankind: being themſelves full of all "filthineſs and ſwarming with the moſt "abominable Vices. But he who by all "the wonderful things he did, called the "ſpectators to the correction of their man- "ners and the amendment of their lives; "propounded himſelf alſo, not only to his "familiar diſciples, but to all others Παρά- "δειγμα ἀρίστου εἶν, a pattern and exam- "ple of the beſt and moſt excellent life. "That ſo, both his Diſciples might be in- "ſtructed to teach Men the will of God; "and others, being taught by his Word "and manners more than by his Miracles "how to live, might have reſpect to no- "thing elſe in all they did, but how to "pleaſe God. Now if the life of Jeſus was "ſuch as this, what Man of ſence is there "that can compare him with Magicians, "and not rather believe him to be God "appearing in an humane body, ἐπ' εὐερ- "γεσίᾳ τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν, to be a benefactor

"to Mankind and bestow the greatest bles-
"sings on us.

But, because this Argument is very large, let us draw it into a narrower compass; and take particular notice onely of these two sorts of miraculous works; *casting out of Devils,* and *raising the dead.*

I. As for the former, the *casting of Devils* out of a number of distracted and mad or melancholy People, whose depraved imaginations were oft-times furiously moved by the power of evil spirits; it is the more remarkable, because it declares he had as great a power over the invisible World, as they saw him have over the bodies of Men, and over the water, the winds, and things growing upon the Earth: all which yield some examples of his Miraculous works. Who could this be, but the Lord of Angels and Men and all other things, who commanded the Prince of the power of the Air and all his Legions, and they could not resist him? Was it not an Argument that *God was with him,* as *S. Peter* speaks, when no created power whatsoever could withstand him? For you may observe further, (2.) That there were no kind of Devils which did not presently

give

give place, when he required them to come out. There might have been some colour, as *Athanasius* well observes *, to say he cast out Devils by *Beelzebub*, if he had not expelled all; though never so numerous, and never so outragious. The Prince of Devils might have been supposed, to have had power over the lesser fry. But since it was apparent, that πᾶσα τῶν δαιμόνων μανία, all the fury and madness of Dæmons fled before him, at the very mention of his Name; we must confess that *our Lord and Saviour was no Dæmonaical power; but the very Son of God, the Word,* (as he speaks) *the Wisdome and the Power of the Father.* Nay, (3.) he not only expelled them himself, but gave his Twelve Apostles authority to cast them out. Thereby showing he came to deliver Men from the dominion of the Devil, in that he gave the meanest Men such power over him. *Go ye,* says he, x. Matth. 7. 8. *and preach, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand; heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out Devils, freely ye have received, freely give.* This was long before they received the *HOLY GHOST*, presently after they were called into his attendance; and therefore was a portion of the *SPIRIT*, which testified their *CHRIST* or *KING* was

* *De incarn. verbi, p.* 103.

not far off, but would shortly visit them. For they were sent to prepare the people for him, as *seventy two* Disciples more were afterward, though with a less portion of the SPIRIT than the twelve Apostles had. For when he sent them with the same commission to *preach*, that the other had, we read of no other *power* given them, but *to heal the sick* in every City, whereinto they came, x. *Luke* 9. But they were possessed with such an high opinion of the power of their Master who sent them, that they adventured further; and in his name *cast out Devils*, as well as healed sick people. For when they returned back to give him an account, they tell him, with no small joy, *Lord, even the Devils are subject unto us through thy name, ver.* 17.

Which might well have such power, though they had no particular authority given them to cast out Devils by it, since it was very terrible to them (you may observe further (4.)) when pronounced by those who were not of our Saviours company. So S. *Mark* relates, ix. 38. that S. *John* brought a report to him of a man whom they had seen casting out Devils in his name, and yet was none of his follow-

ers;

ers; for *we forbad him*, says he, *because he followeth not us*. To which *Jesus* replies, that there was no cause to prohibite him; for this must needs prove a convincing argument to the man himself, if not to others, that he was *the Christ*; *ver.* 39. *There is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.* Of this sort they seem to have been to whom our Saviour appeals when the *Pharisees* accused him of confederacy with *Beelzebub*. That's strange, saith He, did you ever hear of a Devil cast out in the name of any Magician? In my name there is, even by those who are more related to you, than they are to me: Let them therefore determine this matter. That seems to be the sence of those words, xii. *Matth.* 27. *By whom then do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your Judges.* There are those who are none of my Disciples, but yours, that use my name for the casting out of Devils, who immediately fly before them. What do you think of *them*; do *they* deal with *Beelzebub*? I know you will not pass such a judgment on your own disciples, and therefore this fact of theirs condemns your partiality, and proves my Divine vertue.

Nay,

Nay, the Devils themselves we find, (5.) were so astonished at this power, which they felt in his name, that thereupon they acknowledged him to be the CHRIST. For that's their meaning, when they confessed him to be the *HOLY ONE of God*, i. *Mark* 24. And so S. *Luke* expounds it, iv. 41, *The Devils also came out of many, crying out and saying, Thou art the Christ, the Son of God.* And (6.) the most unprejudiced people, who could not be worse than Devils, took this miraculous work of the *SPIRIT* to be an argument of it, xii. *Matth.* 23. *Then was brought unto him one possessed with a Devil, blind and dumb, and he healed him; insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?* By that name they called their KING, whom they expected with the power of working more miracles than any Prophet before had done, vii. *John* 31. And therefore (7.) when *Cornelius* and his company were desirous to hear of S. *Peter all things that were commanded him of God*, x. *Acts* 33. he refers them to this in the first place (after he had mentioned his being anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power)

as

as an argument why they should believe in *Jesus*, that *he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil.* And he offers himself together with others, as *witnesses of all things that he did both in the Land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem.* Which were the more wonderful I must add (8.) in the last place, because he was a person of such mean education. Nothing like to *Moses* in this, who was bred up in *Pharaohs* Court, and acquainted with all the learning of the *Egyptians.* But *Jesus* was bred up privately and in an homely manner, having no advantages at all from a liberal institution. Which was the cause that the people of his own Country, who knew how he had been trained up, *were astonished, saying,* xiii. Matth. 54,55. *Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the Carpenter's Son? is not his Mother called Mary? and his brethren James and Joses, and Simon and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? whence then hath this man all these things?* That is, do not we know him and all his kindred? How comes he to be wiser and more powerful than they? His parentage is poor; his breeding was in a Carpenters house; he never learnt of any of the Doctors and Masters in *Israel*; nor

was otherways disciplin'd than we our selves; where then did he learn his skill? and who gave him this power?

This was a just cause of *astonishment*, but none at all of *offence*, as S. *Matthew* in the following words, *ver.* 57. tells us it proved. That which made them stumble, should have rather drawn them to him, and wrought faith in them; when they saw such wonderful things done, and such excellent things said, by one that could not have them, unless it were from God. It could be no part, they might easily think, of the Devils craft, to dispossess himself; and therefore they ought to have concluded that he was the enemy of the Devil; and indeed the destroyer of him, whom God promised to send into the world. And so they would have concluded, had not their eyes been blinded with the splendour and pomp of this world, and with the love of riches, and such like things. Which made them readier to follow a man that by the force of arms, and their assistance, promised to subdue the *Roman* Legions, than him, who by one word speaking, they saw could cast out Legions of Devils. Which naughty temper of mind, is that which still

ſtill prejudices men againſt the faith, and makes their hearts indiſpoſed to receive Chriſtianity. They prefer the world before God, and love their bodies better than their ſouls: otherwiſe they would find themſelves inclined to believe in the name of Chriſt. If they conſidered what God is, what honour is due unto him, and what it is that will make a Soul truly happy, and deſired this above all other things; they would preſently ſee that none ever glorified God ſo much as our Saviour; none ſo plainly taught the world what worſhip, honour and obſervance is to be given to him; none ever ſo contrived the improvement and happineſs of our immortal Spirits: and ſo they would be diſpoſed to hearken with due reverence and ſerious attention, to what theſe *Witneſſes* ſay concerning him. Nay, did they but prudently conſult the good of their bodies only, and had reſpect not merely to their preſent ſatisfaction, but to their perpetual felicity; it would certainly provoke them to examine carefully the Teſtimony which God hath given him; becauſe he promiſes to change theſe vile bodies, and make them glorious, *by that power whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf.* And there is not the leaſt reaſon to doubt of his

power

power now that he is in Heaven, since it was so miraculous while he was here upon Earth, that He frequently raised the dead. Which is the second thing of which I am to speak a few words.

II. And there is nothing of this kind like to that of *Lazarus*, his rising to life again, after he had been dead four days, and was already so far putrified, as his friends thought, that they dissuaded our Saviour from having his Tomb opened, lest it should prove offensive and noisom to him. For with this S. *John* concludes all that he had to say of our Saviours miraculous works; there being nothing that could be thought of beyond it. For it never entred into the mind of any man to think, that a person really dead, as *Lazarus* undoubtedly was, could be restored to life by any power but that which gives us life, the power of Almighty God. And therefore our Lord plainly designed this, as the last thing he could do for their satisfaction while he was on Earth, to prove that he was the *Son of God*. Else *Lazarus* had not died, but he would have gone and prevented it, as he did in many other cases. For when he heard that *Lazarus* was sick, he would not stir from the

place

place where he was, notwithstanding the love he had both for him and for his two sisters. So S. *John* observes when he tells us, xi. *John* 5, 6. *Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.* This is a strange reason for his making no more haste, being at a great distance also from him. One would think that he should have said, *THEREFORE he began his journey presently into Judea, that he might come time enough to save him whom he loved.* But he resolved the quite contrary, *because the Son of God was to be glorified by this sickness, ver.* 4. Therefore he stayed so long before he would move towards him, that *Lazarus* might be dead before he got to *Bethany*: and He might get more *glory* by his resurrection, than he had done by healing so many sicknesses, and casting out such a number of Devils. For this proved that he had power not only to break, but utterly *to destroy the works of the Devil*, and to tread him quite under foot, who had the *power of death.*

For which reason he tells his Disciples that he was glad for their sakes that he was not there when *Lazarus* died, *to the intent*

intent they might believe, ver. 15. Have their faith, that is, more confirmed in him, by seeing such an illustrious miracle wrought upon *Lazarus* after he was dead, than it could have been by healing his sickness, and preserving him from death. They had seen many desperate diseases cured, but never any man raised to life after he had been so long dead. Some of the *Jews* indeed objected this to him, that he ought to have been so kind, as to have saved his friends life, if he had had the power which he pretended. *Could not this man*, say they, *which opened the eyes of the blind have caused that even this man should not have died? ver.* 37. They do not by these words express their Faith, but their unbelief: and upbraid him with weakness or want of love. The latter could not be imputed to him, for by his tears, just before mentioned, *ver.* 35, 36. they all observed how much he loved him. But from thence some of the company took occasion to disparage his power, and to ask the rest of their neighbours, how they could believe that he had opened a blind mans eyes (as was commonly reported, Chap. ix.) when he suffered one, whom he loved so much, to want his help and perish? If he had done the former, how easie

eaſie had it been for him to do the latter? In which he failing, though his affection could not but move him to do his utmoſt for his Friend, they took it to be a demonſtration, that he was not ſuch a mighty Man as the People imagined. This perverſe reaſoning moved our Saviour very much, ſo that he *groaned again in himſelf* (*v.*38.) to ſee their deplorable obſtinacy and malice; as much as he had done before (*v.*33.) to hear their pitious lamentations which they made for the dead. Theſe mens condition was far more pitious; becauſe he foreſaw there was but little hope, that they would be moved, when they ſaw their frivolous cavil anſwered, by the Reſurrection of *Lazarus*. Which would ſhow there was good reaſon why he let him dye; that he might expreſs never the leſs love to *him*, but more to *them* and to all Mankind by reſtoring his life, which was a more Divine work by much, than to have ſaved him from Death.

To this therefore he immediately applies himſelf and bids the Siſter of the deceaſed, whoſe faith it ſeems began to ſtagger, not doubt but ſhe ſhould *ſee the glory of God*, verſ. 40. ſuch a ſtupendious inſtance, that is, of the power of God in him, as

would move many to give glory to God that ſent him. For wherein could the Majeſty of God appear more to their aſtoniſhment, than in ſuch a marvailous work as this? which when he entred upon, he firſt lift up his eyes to him and called him *Father*; on purpoſe that the People might believe he came from God and was his Son, when they ſaw him anſwer his Prayers in this manner: *verſ.* 41, 42. Where, if you read the place, you will ſee he gives this reaſon why he made a publick acknowledgment to God, for hearing him ſo often: not becauſe he doubted of his preſence with him now; but meerly that the by-ſtanders might know, by whom he did ſuch miracles, and aſcribing them to no other power but his, might believe that he had ſent him. What ſhould they believe elſe; when they heard him, after this addreſs to God, commanding *Lazarus* with *a loud voice* (expreſſing his aſſurance and authority) to come forth: and when they beheld him who could not lately move himſelf in his Bed, riſe up out of his Tomb, and walk about, not only reſtored to life, but in perfect health? This ſtruck the hearts of many of the *Jewes* who were there preſent ſo powerfully, that *they believed on him*, verſ. 45. that is, concluded he

he was more than a *Prophet*, no leſs than the *Meſſiah* himſelf. And thoſe Cavillers before mentioned, who ſtill perſiſted to maintain their infidelity by the abſurdeſt imaginations, were ſo ſtartled at it; that they went preſently and told ſome of the Great *Sanhedrim* what *Jeſus* had done; wiſhing them, I ſuppoſe, to look to themſelves, and not ſuffer theſe proceedings, *verſ.* 46. For they were ſo alarmed with this news, that a Council forthwith is called, and they enter into a ſolemn Debate what courſe to take with him; ſeeing plainly how powerful this Miracle was to win him Proſelytes, and draw the People to him, *verſ.* 47. It had had that effect upon many already, as you have heard: and they were afraid it would increaſe the number of his Diſciples ſo much; that it would prove their utter ruine. For they ſay, verſ. 48. *If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans ſhall come and take away both our place and Nation.* That is, the People will proclaim him their King, and thereby we ſhall incur the indignation of *Cæſar*; who will ſend an Army, and cut us off, till he leave neither root nor branch (as it is, iv. *Mal.* 1.) but deſtroy both us and our Temple. That *place* they were reſolved to preſerve,

though it were with his deſtruction: whoſe death they now determine, as ſoon as ever they could catch him. For ſo their conſultation ended; firſt they decreed (*v.* 53.) that for the publick good, as they called it, He ſhould be put to death; and then that if any knew where he was (*v.* 57.) they ſhould give notice of it, that he might be apprehended in order to his trial. Thus their blind malice turned the moſt powerful means of their converſion, into the ground and reaſon of his deſtruction. For becauſe he did ſo many miracles (*v.* 47.) they did not think it fit to let him live; when-as for that very cauſe they ought to have believed on him, and thought him worthy to live eternally. For, I think theſe *Three* things are very conſiderable, wherewith I ſhall conclude this part of the *SPIRITS* teſtimony.

I. Firſt, this Miracle wrought upon *Lazarus*, was ſo evident a token, that he was the Son of God; that it had in it all the conditions, which the *Gentile* King, whom the *Jews* ſpeak of in the Book *COSRI**, requires in a prodigy, ſufficient to perſwade men to believe that God ſpeaks by him that works it. "Our mind, ſays he, "cannot be brought to think that God "enters

* *Part.* 1. *Sect.* 8.

"enters into ſociety with fleſh and blood,
"unleſs it be by ſuch a miracle, whereby
"the nature of things is inverted: ſo that
"it appears it could not have been done by
"any power, but only by his who is the
"author of Nature, and made all the things
"we ſee, out of nothing at all. And *ſe-*
"*condly*, this miracle muſt not be wrought
"in ſecret, but, to gain belief, it muſt be
"done before the eyes of a multitude;
"who may ſee it, and be ſatisfied of the
"truth of it. And *laſtly*, diligent inquiry
"muſt be made, and it muſt be examined
"ſtrictly; that no doubt may be left in
"mens minds, but they may be fully ſa-
"tisfied it is no fancy, nor done by any
"trick or ſubtile impoſture. Now if we conſult this Hiſtory of *Lazarus*, we ſhall find there is none of theſe wanting, to ſettle the moſt doubtful mind in the belief of our Saviours Almighty power and authority. For to raiſe the Dead is a work that exceeds all natural powers. There is none that can reſtore life, as has been ſaid already, but he who at the firſt gave it. So much the *Jewes* themſelves acknowledge; who have a common ſaying, that the *Key of the Grave* is one of the *four* keys, which is kept in the hands of the Lord of the World alone. לא למלאך ולא לשרף

Neither to Angel, nor to Seraph (as the Jerusalem *Targum* speaks upon xxx. *Gen.* 22.) that is, neither to lowest, nor the highest of the Celestial Ministers is this power given: but it is reserved to him onely that made them and all things else.

Now that our Saviour indeed raised a dead man, there were many witnesses, as you heard before, from xi. Joh. 45. where it is said, that *many of the Jews which came with Mary, and had seen these things which Jesus did, believed on him.* And the fame of it was so great, that it drew a greater concourse of People thither to be satisfied of the truth of the report. For he tells us, xii. 9. *that much People* (i. e. a multitude) *of the Jews came to that place, not for Jesus his sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.* Nay, the Pharisees, as I told you, had the news of it brought to them by some that were present, *and had seen the things which Jesus did* (xi. 46.) who were curious enough, no doubt, to inquire into the business; and had satisfied themselves that indeed he was dead, laid in his Grave, and continued in that state till according to the course of Nature, he must begin to turn to corruption

and

and ſtink. Which was all that needed any proof; for that he was now alive their eyes were witneſſes. And therefore they could not deny this miracle, verſ. 47. But to extinguiſh the light, and take away the convincing power of it; they thought it was beſt to remove *Lazarus* out of the way, and to put him to death as well as our Saviour. For the ſight of him converted a great many, as you read xii. 10, 11. *The chief Prieſts conſulted, that they might put Lazarus alſo to death. Becauſe that by reaſon of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jeſus.* It was a thing confeſſed then, that this wonderful work had been done. There was the teſtimony of the man himſelf, and of his Siſters, and of our Saviour's Diſciples, and of *MANY of the Jews, who were come to comfort Martha and Mary concerning their Brother*, xi. 19. In ſo much that not long after, our Saviour coming to the Feaſt of the Paſſover at Jeruſalem, *Much people went forth to meet him*, and brought him in with a triumph due only to ſo great a Perſon, ſaying, *Hoſanna, bleſſed is the KING of Iſrael, that cometh in the Name of the Lord*, xii. 12. And if you would know what excited them to meet him; it was the fame of this miracle, which the eye-witneſſes of it had brought to them;

as you read there, *ver.* 17, 18. *The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raiſed him from the dead,* BARE RECORD. *For this cauſe the people alſo met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.*

Here, it is viſible, were two Troops or Companies, both called *much people*: one of which went from *Jeruſalem* to *Bethany* to ſee *Lazarus* whom *Jeſus* had raiſed from the dead, *ver.* 9. The other met *Jeſus* the next day as he was coming from *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem*, *ver.* 12, 13. For they had been informed by thoſe who were preſent at the time when it was done, that for certain *Lazarus* was raiſed from his grave by the word of *Jeſus*; and now they were confirmed in this belief by the company that went to *Bethany* the day before to enquire of it, who teſtified to theſe that came to meet him, that they found it to be an undoubted truth, that he had been really dead and now was alive again, by no other means but thoſe words of his, *Lazarus, come forth*, which might well make them all acknowledge him to be their KING, who was come unto them *in the name of the Lord*, as appeared by

by this miraculous work which none but the hand of Heaven could effect. What heart would not be moved to bow to him, who had ſuch power over quick and dead? who could think him to be leſs than the Lord of all, who they ſaw was the Lord of life? None but proud ambitious *Phariſees*, who were afraid they ſhould loſe as much authority as he got. Theſe were more ſtartled than ever to ſee ſuch crouds of people flock after him to do him honour; and to hear them applaud him as the great *Son of David*, and follow him with their *Hoſanna's in the higheſt*. This made them deſpair of blaſting his fame, and diſcrediting him with the people, as long as he lived; and therefore they grew the more reſolved to haſten the execution of their decree againſt him, that he ſhould be put to death. For *they ſaid among themſelves*, as you read in the following words, *ver.* 19. *Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world* (that is, vaſt multitudes) *is gone after him*: followed him, that is, as their KING, notwithſtanding all that had been done to diſparage him. They are forced here to ſpeak more truth than they were aware of, that it was in vain to oppoſe him. For even when they had killed him, *they perceived* preſently

that

that they prevailed nothing: but found this literally true, that indeed *the world went after him.* Men of all Nations, and not the *Jews* only, followed him zealously, and became his Disciples; notwithstanding the scandal of the Cross, which they had cast in their way to discourage them. Of which there immediately follows in this story, an illustrious presage. For some *Gentiles* desiring to see our Saviour (*ver.* 20.) there came a voice from Heaven, upon his prayer that God would glorifie his own Name, saying, *I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again, ver.* 28. The glory of God, that is, had appeared lately (as I have explained it before) in the raising of *Lazarus*, which had drawn many of the *Jews* to him; and he promises shortly to make it appear more brightly by raising up *Jesus* from the dead, which would draw also many such *Gentiles* as these to believe on his name.

To conclude this, that which the above named *Jewish* writer pretends in favour of *Moses*, that he appeared and did his wonders in an age when the world was full of wisdom and knowledge, is a great deal truer of our blessed Saviour. For as he rightly notes * that *Learning still went along*

* *Sepher Cosri Par.* 1. *Sect.* 63.

along with the Monarchies; ſo it never was at a greater height than in the greateſt Empire, that of the *Romans*; and in the higheſt pitch of that Empire, when our Saviour appeared. Upon which account there cannot be any ſuſpicion of fraud in this or the reſt of our Saviours miracles, which were not wrought in an ignorant age, nor in an obſcure and barbarous Nation, nor in ſome blind corner of the Country; but openly, near a famous City, (for *Bethany* was hard by *Jeruſalem*) where there were profeſſors of wiſdom; and in a time when men could eaſily diſtinguiſh between a real miracle and a mere deluſion. This therefore ought to have opened their eyes to ſee who he was, whoſe miraculous works they could not but ſee. And it is juſtly mentioned to their eternal reproach, in the concluſion of this ſtory, xii. *John* 37. that *though he had done ſo many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.* For they could not with any colour aſcribe them to any power but that of Gods; who hereby told *them* what the voice from Heaven told *him*, that *this was his beloved Son in whom he was well pleaſed.*

II. And truly there can no good reaſon be

be given (which is the *second* thing that I told you should be considered) why the Apostles should spend so great a part of the short History they have left of his Life, in relating his miraculous works, if they had not both known them to be evident and notorious things, which all the Country could witness, and likewise esteemed them mighty demonstrations, that he was the *Son of God*. Why else are they so large in describing his cures of several sorts, with the manner of them; if they were not sure that they could not be contradicted; and if they did not desire they should be carefully heeded; and concluded likewise that if they were, men would acknowledge him to be the CHRIST, whom God had sanctified and sent into the world to declare his will to them? Which belief, if it were once rooted deeply in their hearts, the Apostles knew very well would irresistibly constrain them, to be obedient to him in every thing. This is that which gives his words such authority, which makes them sink into our hearts, and possesses them of our very Souls, and turns all other opinions and perswasions, which are inconsistent with them, out of doors; a belief that our Creator speaks unto us by his mouth.

They

They were well aware, that it was no eaſie thing to perſwade the world of this, but that men might juſtly doubt of ſo ſtrange a report. "For there is ſuch a vaſt "diſtance between God and us (as the *Jews* "make that *Gentile* King *Coſar* diſcourſe, "in the forementiond Book called after "his Name) that a man will be apt to "think the Majeſty of Heaven will not "enter into ſuch familiarity and friendſhip "with fleſh and bloud, as to talk with "them. Before we can believe this, ſays "He, we muſt ſee prodigies, and mi-"racles, and behold the courſe of nature "inverted, by ſuch aſtoniſhing works, as "can be done by none but him that created "all things. And it is well, if after all "this, the mind of man will reſt ſatisfied, "that the Lord of the World, the Lord "of the Sun, and Moon, and Stars, the "Lord of Angels as well as all inferiour "Creatures, will have ſociety with ſuch "vile clay, ſuch contemptible dirt as we "are. And therefore as the *Jew* in that Diſcourſe with him declares how God demonſtrated his preſence with *Moſes* by mighty miracles, ſeen by all the people, and by their enemies too; which were the fitteſt argument for God to uſe, far beyond

beyond the little reaſonings and diſputings of Philoſophers: even ſo the Apoſtles prove to us that God was in our Saviour, and that we ought to believe what he ſays of himſelf, or concerning us, by enumerating many of the mighty wonders which he did in the midſt of the people; wonders that amazed all beholders, and of which they could give no account, but that God was with him, and ſpake by him as his Son; elſe he could not have done thoſe things which ſo much exceeded all the power of Creatures, nay, all that his own power had wrought for the honour of his ſervant *Moſes*. It was unreaſonable that they ſhould in thoſe days ask any greater tokens of a Divine authority; and when they did, our Saviour told them they ſhould have none but the ſign of the Prophet *Jonas*, that is, his Reſurrection, of which I ſhall ſpeak preſently. And it is as unreaſonable in us now, to expect any thing ſhould be better atteſted than this truth, That our Saviour did all thoſe things which the Apoſtles have recorded. We have them reported from thoſe that ſaw them, and that had all opportunities to examine them, from thoſe that beheld more of them than they could number; men of great fidelity and admirable

rable vertue; men that had no intereſt ſo great as this, to declare the truth for the good of mankind, whatſoever they loſt by it. Unleſs we will demand that Chriſt ſhould come again in every Age, and alſo work his wonders in every Nation, in every place, before every particular mans eyes; we can have no better aſſurance than we have of theſe things. Now how abſurdly unreaſonable is he who will not be ſatisfied without ſuch a new deſcent of our bleſſed Saviour from Heaven continually repeated; and unleſs he may ſee him crucified afreſh before his eyes? For men may as well disbelieve that part of the ſtory as all the reſt, and require that they may ſee all thoſe barbarous cruelties and indignities which we read of, acted over again upon our Saviour perpetually, to the end of the World. The very mention of which as it is horrible, ſo ſhould it be done, it would deſtroy the very nature of faith: which is the receiving of ſomething upon report. And that is one ſure way of conveying the notice of things to us, which we could not otherwiſe know. And things ſo made known, if the Witneſſes be good, are accounted by all mankind to be as ſufficient a ground to proceed upon, in the moſt conſiderable actions of humane

humane life, as the knowledge of them by ſeeing, feeling, and by the reſt of our ſenſes is.

Let us therefore receive the Teſtimony of the Apoſtles of our Lord; ſeeing there is no exception (as you may hear more before I have done) that lies againſt their perſons, with any ſhadow or colour of reaſon. Let us perſwade our ſelves that this is a true Hiſtory which they have written, and then we have no faculty of diſcourſing, if we cannot conclude who our Saviour was. He could not poſſibly have done ſuch things, as the blind man well argued, when his eyes were opened by him, ix. *John* 31, 33. *if he had been a ſinner*: that is, a deceiver, and not authorized by God to come in his Name. If he had been a mere pretender to this dignity, God would not have honoured him on this faſhion, nor have given countenance to a lye, by as great miracles as can be wrought for the proof of any Truth. He would not have deprived himſelf of all means to declare his will to us, as he muſt have done, if he had ſuffered ſuch a vaſt number of miracles to be wrought by a deceiver for three years together, and given the moſt honeſt-hearted men no means to

diſcover

diſcover the cheat. We cannot believe him to be wiſe, and to have a care to preſerve his own authority, and to ſupport his government, and not think that he would ſome way or other have controuled the deſignes of a perſon of ſuch high pretences, if he had oppoſed *Him*, and come without his conſent, as his only begotten Son, into the world. In brief, if all theſe things be true which are reported, then our Saviour was *God manifeſted in our fleſh*; and you know what regard and reverence is due to ſuch a perſon: And that they are true, we have not the leaſt reaſon to doubt, being reported by *eye witneſſes of his majeſty and power*; who were ſo convinced of his Divine authority that they ventured their fortunes and lives in his ſervice, merely to promote his honour. And as that whereby they perſwaded others to believe in him was the power of the SPIRIT working ſo many miracles by their hands, and the power of the HOLY GHOST in divers other wonderful gifts: ſo it was the ſame SPIRIT that firſt convinced them, and made them confidently conclude, that he was the *Son of God*. For the firſt time that we find they made a ſolemn acknowledgment of him, was upon the working of a great mi-

racle, before S. *Peter, James* and *John* heard the voice from Heaven, when they were with him in the holy Mount. He had fed, you read xiv. *Matth.* 19, *&c.* five thouſand men, beſide women and children, with five Loaves and two Fiſhes. And as ſoon as he had done, *ſtraight-way conſtrained his Diſciples to get into a ſhip, and go before him unto the other ſide* (*ver.* 22.) leſt they ſhould joyn with the multitude in the deſign which he ſaw they had in hand (vi. *John* 15.) *to take him by force and make him a King.* When he had diſmiſſed the multitude, and ſpent the reſt of the day in prayer, he overtook his Diſciples in the midſt of the Sea, in the fourth watch of the night, and found them toſſed with the waves, becauſe the wind was contrary, xiv. *Matth.* 24, 25. They were afraid at the firſt ſight of him, and imagined it had been a Ghoſt: who perhaps they thought had raiſed that ſtorm. But when he ſpake to them, and bad them be of chear, and ſaid, *It is I, be not afraid*; *Peter* was deſirous, if it were he, that he would call him to him, and enable him to walk upon the water with him. And ſo he did, as if it had been firm land, till his heart began to fail him, when he ſaw the wind boiſterous. But then our Lord put forth

forth his hand and kept him from sinking: and both brought him safe to the ship, and made a calm. Upon this, *They that were in the ship* (that is, the rest of the Disciples) *came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God, ver.* 33. The sudden ceasing of the wind, that is, his coming to them upon the water, his bearing up *Peter*, and making him walk along with him, and that when the surface of the water was not plain, but very rough by the crosness of the wind, and his feasting also great multitudes with little provision; made them conclude without any more ado, that he was greater than any man ever was. Their minds were overcome by this mighty power of God in him, which subdued their understandings perfectly to the faith, and so bowed and inclined their hearts, that they could not but prostrate themselves at his feet, and acknowledge him to be the anointed of God. They believed no doubt before that he was a great *Prophet*, and a *teacher sent of God* (as *Nicodemus* did) nay, had some beginnings of faith that he was the *Messiah* (i. *John* 41, 45.) But it was not till now that they were sure of it, and did him honour as, *of a truth*, or certainly, *the Son of God*. And

they were no eaſie People, that believed lightly and fooliſhly, only out of love of novelty, or ſome ſuch vain humour: but were convinced and overpowred by the hand of God, which was ſtretched out to work ſuch wonders as theſe, whenſoever *Jeſus* pleaſed.

III. And therefore he had great reaſon (which is the third and laſt conſideration) when any diſputed or doubted of his authority, to refer them, as he doth very often, to his miraculous works for a proof of it: and he appeals to them as one of his *Witneſſes*, according as *S. John* here calls them, when he ſays the *SPIRIT beareth witneſs*. So you read in ſeveral places of his Goſpel; where you find that when the *Jews* incircled him, as if they would not let him ſtir till he told them plainly whether he was the *CHRIST* or not, x. Joh. 24. *He anſwered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Fathers name, they bear WITNESS of me.* As if he had ſaid, I have no more for the preſent to tell you, than I have told you often by my *works*. If you can ſee nothing in theſe to convince you that I am the CHRIST, all my telling you ſo in *words* will be to no purpoſe, but for the preſent you muſt remain

main in unbelief. To the ſame effect he diſcourſes again in the ſame Chapter, verſ. 37, 38. *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not* (though I ſhould ſay never ſo oft, I am his Son) *But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the* WORKS: *that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.* And thus he reaſons with *S. Philip*, xiv. Joh. 10, 11. *Believeſt thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I ſpeak unto you I ſpeak not of my ſelf: But the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the* WORKS. (a clear ſign he ſpake not of himſelf, and that he was moſt nearly one with the Father) *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or elſe believe me for the very* WORKS *ſake.* And ſo he tells all his Apoſtles, that the Jews were inexcuſable upon this account, becauſe they did not acknowledge him for the Son of God, though he did ſuch miracles as *Moſes* and all the Prophets never did, xv. Joh. 24. *If I had not done among them the* WORKS *which none other man did, they had not had ſin:* (in not *receiving* him as their Meſſiah, the Son of God) *but now they have both ſeen* (by thoſe WORKS which he did) *and* (yet) *hated both me and my Father.* They could not endure ſuch a Meſſiah as he was,

though so divinely impowered; and consequently had no love to God, who had set such plain marks and characters of his approbation upon him. Of which his Divine works were the chief; for he alledges these (as *S. John* here in his Epistle doth) as the last witness and evidence to him upon Earth, v. Joh. 36. *But I have a greater witness than that of John; for the* WORKS *which the Father hath given me to finish, the same* WORKS *that I do, bear* WITNESS *of me, that the Father hath sent me.* Yea, when *John* himself sent his Disciples to know of him whether he was the *CHRIST*, he plainly shows that he lookt on this as a greater testimony to him than that of their Master; which they had received already: and therefore gives them no other answer but this; *Go, and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them,* xi. *Matth.* 4, 5. Where though he mention his heavenly doctrine, yet he chiefly insists upon the Witness of the SPIRIT, as most apt to affect them: and *in that very hour,* when they came to be resolved, as S. *Luke* tells us, vii. 21. *He cured many of their infirmities and plagues,*

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and of evil ſpirits, and unto many that were blind he gave ſight.

This he thought could not but ſatisfie them, if they would believe their eyes; eſpecially if they would believe alſo what they *heard*, that he raiſed up the dead. He could not now give them a clearer and fuller teſtimony of his Divinity: and he relyed ſo much upon this evidence, that when he had cured a Man ſick of the Palſy, he told the Scribes that he looſed him from the chain of his ſins, and reſtored him to health, and bad him ariſe and walk, now that he was pardoned, on purpoſe *that they might know the Son of Man hath power on EARTH to forgive ſins*, ix. Matth. 6. That is, to take away all *temporal* puniſhment that is due to ſin; as after his death and reſurrection, when he came to HEAVEN, he had power to take away the *Eternal*, and to give life Immortal. Now who could have ſuch a power but God only, as the Scribes ſay very well upon this occaſion? ii. *Mark* 7. Who could grapple with the Devil, the *Prince* the *God of this World* (xii. Joh. 31. 2 Cor. iv. 4.) but only He who is God bleſſed for ever, as Jeſus appeared by theſe miraculous works to be? And indeed it is very remarkable that He

wrought his miracles frequently, just as God Almighty brings things to pass. *God,* says *Moses, said, Let there be Light, and there was light. He spake,* as the Psalmists words are, *and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast.* In like manner did our Saviour say to the Leper, viii. *Matth.* 3. *Be thou clean: and immediately his Leprosie was cleansed.* And to the foul spirit, ix. *Mark* 25. *Come out, I charge thee, thou dumb and deaf spirit:* and the spirit cryed and came out. And to *Lazarus, Come forth; and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes.* Which was a notable evidence that indeed he was the Son of God; since he acted so like to the Father Almighty. This was so well known that when the *Centurion* came and besought him for a sick Servant of his, who lay in grievous torments, and our Saviour promised to come and heal him; He modestly declines the acceptance of that favour, in a sense of his unworthiness to have him come under his roof, and desires him that he would SPEAK THE WORD ONELY, and he believed his Servant should be healed, viii. *Matth.* 8. The first Cure that we read particularly related being that of the Leper aforementioned (*v.* 3.) and wrought by a *Word*; He hoped, it is

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like, that his Servant might be cured as eaſily, without giving our Saviour the trouble of coming to his Houſe, and laying his hands on him for his recovery. Though, by the way, we may note; that herein appeared alſo his great power, that as he could heal (if he pleaſed) without touching, ſo he could heal at a great diſtance. Yea, the Woman that did but touch (not him, but) the very hem of his Garment (v. *Mark* 29.) had vertue or power (that is, ſomething from the SPIRIT that was in him) communicated to her, which reſtored her to perfect health. What doth all this note, but that he who wrought ſuch things; ſo eaſily, ſo readily, in any place, and on all occaſions, was indeed the Son of God? He ought to have been honoured as the Author, becauſe he was the Reſtorer of humane nature. There was great reaſon to acknowledge ſo great a Benefactor to Mankind to be more than a man; for none but God either could or would beſtow ſuch bleſſings.

It may be ſaid indeed that *Moſes* and ſome of the Prophets wrought Miracles; and yet cannot thence be concluded to be perſons of ſuch quality. But it may as eaſily be anſwered, that their miracles were nothing

nothing comparable, either in their Multitude or Greatneſs, to thoſe of the Lord Jeſus. For the Multitude, remember how S. *John* concludes his Goſpel, in which he hath recorded ſome of them: *And there are alſo many other things,* ſays he, *which Jeſus did, the which if they ſhould be written every one, I ſuppoſe that even the World it ſelf could not contain the Books that ſhould be written.* For *he went about,* as hath been often ſaid, *doing good,* and filled every place with ſo many miracles of his mercy; that we cannot imagine into how many Volumes it would have ſwell'd, if a record of every one of them had been taken. And as for the greatneſs and the quality of them, you find ſome, among thoſe which S. *John* hath ſet down, which were never heard of before ſince the World began, ix. Joh. 32. which might well make our Saviour ſay, as I noted juſt now, that *he had done among them the works that no man did,* xv. 24. *elſe they had not had ſin*; that is, he could not have charged them with the guilt of refuſing to believe him to be the Son of God, becauſe it would not have been ſufficiently proved. But this is not all the reply that may be made to this exception: it is far more conſiderable, that Jeſus affirmed himſelf to be the Son of God; to which dig-

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nity neither *Moſes* nor the Prophets ever pretended. The end of miracles, was to prove the truth of that which the perſon that wrought them delivered. And therefore as their miracles demonſtrated the truth of that meſſage which *Moſes* and the Prophets brought from God: So our Saviour's evinced the truth of *his*; which was that they were only the *ſervants*, but He the *Son* of God. This was as ſtrongly atteſted by what he did; as any thing the Men of God taught in former times, was by their works. Yea, his miracles bare as fair a proportion in their bigneſs and number to this high and great thing which they were to prove, that he was Gods Son: as the miracles of *Moſes* and the Prophets bare to thoſe leſſer truths which they were brought to eſtabliſh.

And here for to put a period to this part of my diſcourſe, it will be very uſeful to obſerve the different way of proceeding for the eſtabliſhing and promoting a Religion inſtituted by men, and a Religion whoſe author is God. This I find very well noted to my hand in a learned Writer of the *Jewiſh* Nation, whom I have already mentioned*. When men, ſays he, make Laws and ſetle a Religion, whoſe original is from their

* *Sepher* COSRI. *Part* 1. *ſect.* 80, &c

their own minds, and deviſed by themſelves; though they may pretend that it comes from God, yet they are not able to make it take place, without the power of the Sword, or the countenance and aſſiſtance of ſome Prince who by his Authority ſhall cauſe it to be received. But a Religion that is indeed Divine, is planted in a Divine manner. When Laws are derived from God, he eſtabliſhes them by his power and might, and over-aws men by ſuch wonders, as without any humane force procure obedience. Thus, ſays he, our Religion began. When the Children of *Iſrael* were in grievous ſervitude, and when the Land promiſed to their Fathers was in the hand of potent Kings; God ſent *Moſes* and *Aaron* armed with no power, but that of working miracles, changing the ordinary and uſual courſe of Nature, and inflicting in a moment grievous plagues upon the Water, the Earth, the Air, the Plants, the Beaſts, and the Bodies of Men, throughout all the Land of *Egypt*: whereby the Prince that kept them in bondage was forced to let them go. And in their Journey they were conducted by the guidance of a bright Cloud, and they paſſed through the Sea, and they were fed with Manna in the Wilderneſs XL. Years; and

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ſaw one Miracle after another, which convinced them they ought to ſubmit to that Word of the Lord which *Moſes* ſpake unto them. To this purpoſe that Writer very rationally diſcourſes. Now juſt as He ſhows that *Moſes* proved his Miſſion from God; ſo I have briefly related how our Saviour likewiſe demonſtrated that he was the Royal Prophet, whom *Moſes* foretold God would ſend into the World. In an Age, when they not only groaned under the *Roman* Yoke, but were alſo ſuperſtitiouſly inthral'd to a number of Rites and Ceremonies deviſed by their Elders, ſuperadded to all the burden of the Law of *Moſes*; and moreover grievouſly *oppreſſed by the Devil*, as all the reſt of the World likewiſe were, far more than they; God raiſed up a mighty Salvation to them out of the houſe of his ſervant *David*. Our Lord, that is, on a ſudden appeared as a Redeemer and Deliverer from the bondage in which they lay; not with any worldly policy or force, but meerly with the Spirit and Power of God, 1 *Cor.* ii. 5. who ſent an Herald, but without the power of Miracles, to proclaim his coming. And as ſoon as he had done *crying*, his mouth being ſtopt by *Herod*'s throwing him into Priſon, our Lord preſently came forth;

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ſhining moſt gloriouſly in the illuſtrious works that he did every where: which were ſuch as that time called for, as *Moſes* his miracles were proper to the occaſions and neceſſities of his days. And ſome of them were very like thoſe wrought by *Moſes*, and others bear as great a reſemblance to them, as twins are wont to do to each other, who lie together in the ſame womb. He healed more than *Moſes* killed. He turned their water into wine, as *Moſes* did the water of the River into bloud. He walkt upon the very ſurface of the Sea, and called one of his Diſciples to accompany him there. He fed multitudes with a little quantity of bread, as *Moſes* had fed the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs. This he did more than once, and that in a Deſart too; ſhowing what he was able to do, if there had been the like need, that there was in former times. Then they ſhould not have asked *what ſign ſheweſt thou* (equal to *Moſes* they mean) *what doſt thou work?* vi. *John* 30. For it was plain enough he could have fed them forty years in that manner as well as once; which was the thing they ſeem to deſire, when they ſay in the next words, *ver.* 31. *Our Fathers did eat Manna in the Deſart, as it is written, He gave them bread from*

from Heaven to eat. That is, He did not feed them for one day or two (as thou haſt done) but a long time, and that from Heaven; let us ſee thee do ſo, that we may leave him and follow thee. And if he had not done enough already to work faith in them, and they had lived now alway in a Deſart, as their Fathers did then, no doubt he *would*; for that he *could* was evident, elſe how ſhould he have fed them thus miraculouſly at all? Many other miracles alſo declared that he had the ſame power in the Air, that he had on the Earth, and could as eaſily have brought bread from Heaven, as multiplied the Loaves which had now filled ſo many of them. The very Devils were as ſubject to him as the meaneſt creature in the World. And He raiſed the Dead by his powerful word, which *Moſes* never did. All which is recorded by the Apoſtles to ſhow what cauſe they had to believe in *Jeſus*, and how his Religion was planted and propagated in the world, as the other wonders are recorded by *Moſes*, to ſhow with what authority he came, and how he ſetled the *Iſraelites* in the belief of his Laws. And there is no more cauſe to queſtion whether *Jeſus* be the Son of God, the Lord of the World, who came with

with ſuch a SPIRIT, than there was then to doubt whether *Moſes* was his ſervant and the Lawgiver of that people among whom he did ſuch wonders. Nor ſo much neither, for the greater his pretences were, the greater reaſon there was that they ſhould have been diſcountenanced by ſuch a SPIRIT as was in him, if they had not been true. It is incredible that God ſhould let the world be abuſed ſo long, by ſo many miracles, and ſo great, that never was the like, without any the leaſt confutation; and abuſed by a lye of ſo dangerous a nature, and ſo reproachful to his Name, and ſo directly oppoſite to his Government, which this Perſon (if he were an Impoſtor, and ſaid he was his Son whom we muſt worſhip, when he was not) ſought to overthrow, and take out of his hands. We are ſecure that God would not have abetted an Uſurper, in ſo high a manner, againſt himſelf. And as for any unclean Spirits, if they could have done ſuch things as *Jeſus* wrought, they would not have employed their power, we are ſure, to eſtabliſh a Doctrine ſo pure and holy as the Chriſtian Religion teaches, which utterly deſtroys all that wickedneſs in which they delight. There was all the reaſon in the World to believe one who came thus

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by the SPIRIT, when he came by WATER too; and by his mighty power promoted nothing but the most excellent Piety, Vertue and Goodness among mankind.

But concerning the miracles of our Saviour there will be an occasion to say so much, in pursuance of what I design, hereafter; that I shall add no more of them here. Let us now proceed (having heard what the SPIRIT did *by him*) to consider what wonderful things it did *for him*: whereby it proved him to be the Christ, the Son of God.

II.

And the SPIRIT sure very eminently bare witness of him, when it raised him from the dead, and not long after advanced him into Heaven, to live for ever with God. For both these are ascribed to the power of the SPIRIT, in express texts of Holy Scripture. Of the former you read in the 1 *Pet.* iii. 18. where the Apostle says, *He was put to death in the flesh* (being mortal as we are) *but quickned by the SPIRIT*; that is, raised up again from the dead by that Divine power in him,

whereby he had raised up others before he died. It was impossible that he should be held by the chains of death, who had such a SPIRIT in him. By this he shook them off more easily, than *Samson* brake the Withs or the Cords wherewith he was bound, when the *SPIRIT* of the Lord came mightily upon him. And being thus quickned again, the same *SPIRIT* also presented him to God in the Heavens, as his dearly beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased; who had given him full satisfaction, and done his whole will, for which he sent him into the world. So you read in the ix. *Hebr.* 14. where the *offering* which, the Apostle says, *he made of himself to God, through the eternal SPIRIT*, was that bloudy sacrifice on the Cross, which after his Resurrection he offered to God, and continues still to offer in the Heavenly Sanctuary: as the High Priest under the Law offered the bloud of beasts, after they were slain at the Altar in the most holy place of the Earthly Sanctuary. And this oblation is said to be made by the *SPIRIT*, because that raised him to life after he was slain, translated him out of his mortal condition, carried him on high, made his body glorious and immortal; and having thus made him fit

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to be for ever with God, preſented him unto his Majeſty, where he remains, *through the power of an endleſs life*, a Prieſt for ever after the order of *Melchiſedek*. And *this working of the mighty power of God, which wrought in Chriſt when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the Heavenly places, far above all principalities and powers, might and dominion, and every name that is named*; was ſuch a teſtimony of the *SPIRIT* to him, that it confounded his adverſaries more than all the miracles which he had wrought by the power of the ſame *SPIRIT* in his life-time. And therefore the Apoſtles, I obſerve, alledge this immediately after the other, as that which *compleated the teſtimony* of the *SPIRIT* to him.

Till this was clear and evident, they relied wholly upon the other, as you may perceive by the diſcourſe of thoſe two Diſciples that went with our Saviour to *Emaus*. Who doubted of his Reſurrection after news had been brought them of it, but acknowledged him to have been a *Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people*; and upon that account were much troubled that their Rulers had

crucified him, becauſe they truſted it had been he which ſhould have redeemed *Iſrael*, xxiv. *Luke* 19, 20. When they were fully perſwaded therefore that he was indeed made alive again (as theſe very men preſently ſaw) then they add this as an argument of the greateſt force to convince the world, that he was the Son of God, the Redeemer of mankind. This is the ſubſtance, I obſerve, of both S. *Peter's* firſt Sermons to the *Jews* and to the *Gentiles*. He begins with a relation how great *Jeſus* was in his Life, and then proceeds to ſhow how much greater God had made him by raiſing him from the dead. Read but what he ſays to his Crucifiers on the day of *Pentecoſt*, ii. *Acts* 22, 23, 24. where he firſt tells them that *Jeſus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among them by miracles, and wonders, and ſigns, which God did by him in the midſt of them, as they themſelves very well knew*: And then, that he being *delivered to them, and by wicked hands crucified and ſlain, God had raiſed him up, having looſed the pains of death, becauſe it was not poſſible that he ſhould be holden of it*. In like manner he diſcourſes to the firſt *Gentile* converts, x. *Acts* 38, 39, 40. where he tells *Cornelius* and his friends, how *God anointed Jeſus of Nazareth*

Nazareth with the Holy Ghoſt, and with power; and how he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil, of which they were witneſſes, who had ſeen all that he did both in Judea and in Jeruſalem: and then adds that *God raiſed him up the third day, after he was ſlain and hanged on a Tree; and ſhewed him openly, though not to all the people yet, to witneſſes choſen before God, even to him and others, who did eat and drink with him after he roſe from the dead.* The Apoſtle had nothing to add beyond this, which was the greateſt teſtimony of the *SPIRIT* to him. Now it ſpake with a loud voice in his behalf: for if he had not been God's Son (as he ſaid he was) He would never have taken him out of his grave, much leſs have advanced him into the Heavens. Where it was manifeſted he now lived, by the coming of the HOLY GHOST; which fell upon *Cornelius* and his friends, while S. *Peter* was ſpeaking thoſe words. This was all that could be added to what the Apoſtle had ſaid; and God ſent this to prove his Reſurrection and Exaltation at his right hand. Which was ſuch an undeniable proof of his authority, that having thus raiſed him, the *SPIRIT*, as I ſaid, finiſhed its teſtimony to him. For how ſhould

it ſpeak plainer or more convincingly? or who can think that it would have continued to ſpeak for him, in this manner, after his death, if he had died with a lye in his mouth? The *SPIRIT*, which S. *John* here ſays, is the TRUTH, openly declared by reſtoring him to life, that his Bloud was moſt acceptable to God. It ſhowed that it was no common thing, but the BLOUD of the *Holy one of God*. It witneſſed to that WITNESS, and proved that as he did not ſpeak contrary to his knowledge, ſo he did not ſpeak contrary to the truth. And if the SPIRIT could not be believed in this, it would have loſt all its credit, and never have been believed more; we could never have known any thing by the greateſt wonders it can work, if ſuch things had been done for a deceiver, as it is apparent were done for *Jeſus*.

For that he was raiſed up to life again, we are aſſured by the teſtimony of the Apoſtles, and by the teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt; of which none can reaſonably doubt, as it were eaſie to ſhow, if it were not my preſent buſineſs rather to demonſtrate that this was an irrefragable teſtimony of the SPIRIT to him, a moſt powerful

powerful means to beget faith and assurance in mens minds that *Jesus* is the Son of God. It was for this very end, that S. *John* wrote the History of his Resurrection, and the several signs and tokens they had of it, as he tells us in those words, xx. *John* 30, 31. *Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his Disciples, which are not written in this Book. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his Name.* For this plainly reversed the sentence of condemnation which the *Jews* had pass'd upon him. It showed that he was acquitted in a far higher Court than that, which judged him worthy of death. Whose decree it rescinded, and openly declared that he was no Blasphemer, when he said he was the Son of God. If he had, God would have been more concern'd than they to have kept him fast in his grave for ever: that there, so great a lye might have been buried together with himself.

For the further clearing of which, it will be fit to consider briefly these *three* things. *First*, that before he died, he promised his Apostles that he would rise again, and gave this also as a sign to all

the people, whereby they ſhould know that he was the Chriſt. And, *ſecondly*, that he declared this to be the greateſt ſign he had to give of it. And, *thirdly*, that his very enemies confeſs it is a ſufficient ſign and ſatisfactory teſtimony of any truth.

I. For the firſt of theſe, that it was a ſign promiſed to his Apoſtles, and predicted to the people; there is nothing more eaſie to be obſerved in the Goſpel ſtory. For he tells his Apoſtles very often that they ſhould ſee him betrayed and killed, but on the third day he would riſe again. No ſooner had S. *Peter* confeſſed that he was the CHRIST, but *from that time forth Jeſus began to ſhew them, how that he muſt go to Jeruſalem, and there ſuffer many things, and be killed, and be raiſed again the third day*, xvi. *Matth.* 21. For he would not have them expect a *Chriſt* that ſhould reign here on Earth, but in Heaven. And till he went thither, he would not have them ſo much as preach that he was the CHRIST, *ver.* 20. And what he had ſaid here at *Cæſarea*, he repeats again when they were in *Galilee*, xvii. *Matth.* 22, 23. And again when they were going up to *Jeruſalem*, xx. 19. And

And not many hours before he was apprehended, he ſaid again, *A little while and ye ſhall not ſee me: and again, a little while and ye ſhall ſee me, becauſe I go to the Father,* xvi. *John* 16. At which words they were greatly troubled, becauſe they minded more what he ſaid about his death, than they regarded his reſurrection which was to follow. But the greater their trouble was then, the greater their ſatisfaction was afterwards, when they ſaw him alive again. The leſs diſpoſed they were to believe it, the more confident they grew when they ſaw ſuch a wonder. They wept and lamented when he was gone, as he told them they would (*ver.* 20.) But when he came to ſee them again, their heart rejoyced with ſuch a joy, as none could diſpoil them of, *ver.* 22. The ground of which joy, you ſhall ſee preſently, when I have alſo remembred you how he foretold his Reſurrection to the people, as a teſtimony that he was the CHRIST. It was their wont in all Ages, and with great reaſon, to aſk for a ſign that a man was ſent of God. And therefore now that *Jeſus* came with ſuch authority, as to redreſs many abuſes among them, and to reform that Nation and Temple, they ask him *what ſign ſheweſt thou unto us, ſeeing*

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that thou doest these things? ii. Joh. 18. He had given them signs enough already, and therefore makes no other answer but this (to let them know what should be the last sign.) *Destroy this Temple* (pointing to his own body) and *in three days I will raise it up*, vers. 19.

From whence we may safely argue, that Jesus having given this as a sign and token whereby it should evidently appear, more than by all his miracles, that he was the Son of God; the Almighty would never have fulfilled this promise and prediction, if He had usurped his authority, and taken upon him to be his ANOINTED, without his leave. Nothing was more easie than to quash all his pretences, which relyed upon his Resurrection; without which his Apostles, as I told you, had no authority to Preach that he was the *Christ*. It had been but letting him rot in his grave, as all men naturally do, when they are dead; and all the World would have been of the mind of the Pharisees, that he was a Deceiver. And God sure hath not so little care of the World, as to deny them such ready and obvious means of satisfaction, about the most important truth. We ought to think rather, that he would have con-

concerned himſelf to ſee, that this Temple, which he ſpake of, ſhould lye for ever in its ruines, and be turned to duſt and aſhes. He, who alone could do it, would have been ſo far from rearing it up again, that he would have provided, it ſhould be prophaned, and made the vileſt rubbiſh in the World. But there being very good proofs, *many infallible proofs* (as S. *Luke* ſpeaks, i. Act. 3.) that it was quite otherwayes, and that indeed it was raiſed after three days, as he had told the People; it was a Teſtimony from God moſt high, that He dwelt in that Temple, and that it was his Holy place, where he manifeſted his glory. He declared to them by this, that Jeſus was no Deceiver, but that they ought to believe he was the Chriſt of God. For that a man ſhould be raiſed from the dead, by any other power than that of God's; all the World concludes is impoſſible. If any of thoſe lying ſpirits, which love to cheat and abuſe the world, could do ſuch feats; why do we not ſee this frequently happen: that ſo they might break the force of this teſtimony, and overthrow our belief? Above all things they ſhould be concerned, one would think, to work this wonder; for then we ſhould be forced to confeſs, that there is nothing ſo eminent and ſingular in this

this thing, as to move us to give credit unto Jesus. But since it never has been done, but only in this instance; and it was also a fulfilling of his word, when he gave it as a token of this truth; we have reason to conclude as S. *Paul* did after he had seen him alive, that *this is very CHRIST.* Upon this ground it was that the Apostles so much rejoyced, *when they saw him again*; for now, as S. *John* tells us, ii. 22. *when he was risen from the dead, they remembred that he had said this unto them* (concerning the raising up the Temple of his Body) *and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.* Now they were assured they had not been deluded, and yielded their assent, all this while, to a fancy. They saw clearly that he was their KING, though he had been vilely disgraced and crucified. And therefore, when they parted with him again, after his Resurrection, they did not lament and mourn as they had done before; but *worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem, with great joy: and were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God,* xxiv. Luk. 52, 53.

II. But it is time to add, that as it was a *sign*, which he gave them before-hand of this Truth; so he told them, it was the great-

greateſt ſign which he had to give. He had done many things in his life time to perſwade the *Jews*, that he was the *CHRIST*: But ſtill they were ſo perverſe, as to ask for more ſigns of it. Though he had done more miracles than ever *Moſes*, or all the Prophets had done from the beginning; yet the Phariſees continue to ſay, *Maſter, we would ſee a ſign from thee*, xii. Matth. 38. One would think they had a mind to learn of him, ſince they call him *Maſter*; but it was only a complement, as *S. Luke* informs us, xi. 16. And therefore our Saviour calls them, *an evil and adulterous generation*, who were degenerated from the manners of their pious anceſtors; for they were contented with leſs proofs of that which God required them to believe, and would have been aſhamed to *ſeek after a ſign*, as theſe men did, after ſuch evident tokens of a Divine preſence in him, as they beheld. Why ſhould he gratifie men of ſo naughty a humour, whom nothing would ſatisfie, but *a ſign from Heaven*, which *S. Luke* ſays they demanded? nor would be convinced then neither, he clearly diſcerned by their frivolous cavils at all that he had already done. Therefore he tells them, *no ſign ſhall be given them, but the ſign of the Prophet Jonas* (which was not a

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ſign from Heaven, but from the bowels of the Earth) *For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whales belly: ſo ſhall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth*, verſ. 39,40. Which was as much as to ſay, It is in vain to attempt the conviction of ſuch corrupt and depraved minds as yours are, by ſuch means as theſe. And therefore, I muſt tell you, all that is remaining for the opening your eyes and conquering your perverſneſs, is my Reſurrection. As *Jonas* was miraculouſly reſtored again to live upon the earth, after he had been ſwallowed up by a *Whale* in the Sea, and layn there *three* days; which was a notable ſign that he was a Prophet, and could not but obtain him credit with the *Ninevites*, when they came to the knowledge of this wonder: So will I be reſtored again to life, after you have killed me, and I have layn three days in the bowels of the earth; and if this will not ſatiſfie you, there is no other ſign to follow this for your conviction. But let me tell you (as he adds, *verſ.* 41.) if you ſtill perſiſt in unbelief when this is fulfilled, *the men of Nineveh ſhall riſe in judgment with you and condemn you; for they repented at Jonas his preaching, and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.* That is, though *Jonas* was not really

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dead, but only had his life wonderfully preſerved, yet the report of it wrought faith and the fruits of faith, repentance and amendment, in the hearts of the *Ninevites*; and what a condemnation will it prove to you, if after you have ſeen me actually dead, and it be demonſtrated to you that I am raiſed to life again, you will not believe on me?

The very ſame thing is repeated again, xvi. *Matth.* 4. where, they having once more demanded *a ſign from Heaven*, ver. 1. He anſwers them, that they ſhould have none but this of *Jonas: and he left them, and departed.* As if he had ſaid, I have nothing more to ſay to you now: all that remains, is that I dye and riſe again, which is the laſt and greateſt token that I am the *CHRIST.* And indeed this was a ſign ſo great, that it gave force and ſtrength to the other ſigns which had been given of this Truth. For in the next Chapter (*Matth.* xvii. 9.) we read, that Three Apoſtles having been confirmed in this belief by a voice from Heaven, which ſaid, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed; hear ye him*; Jeſus charges them, ſaying, *Tell the Viſion to no man, until the Son of man be riſen again from the dead.* Till

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He had taken poſſeſſion of his Kingdom and was ſet upon his Throne and thence ſent the Holy Ghoſt, He ſaw it would be to no purpoſe for the Apoſtles to publiſh this teſtimony of God the Father to him. For they had already ſlighted the teſtimony of *John Baptiſt*, who heard the like Voice from Heaven at his Baptiſm, and thereupon bare witneſs that Jeſus was the Chriſt: And therefore it was not likely, that they would liſten to the Apoſtles, when they came and teſtified that the ſame words were ſpoken in their hearing; until their teſtimony ſhould be juſtified by the authority of ſuch a proof as this, that he was riſen from the dead. This would mightily back all that they ſaid; and make it undeniable by any, but thoſe who would ſtill deny his Reſurrection: which was wilfully and without any reaſon, not only to call them lyars, but to affront the Holy Ghoſt, who witneſſed together with them, that he was riſen from the dead. Which being a proof of ſuch ſtrength that our Saviour relyed upon it above all other, it is manifeſt to common reaſon, that if there be a God (as we are ſure there is) who loves ſincerity and truth; he ſhould above all things, have taken order, that this ſhould not have had ſuch evidence as it hath,

hath, if indeed Jeſus was not his Son. Though he had ſuffered wonders to be done by him, and voices from Heaven had been heard, yet ſtill he gained not much belief in the moſt conſiderable part of the *Jewiſh* Nation: and therefore appealing in concluſion to this Grand Teſtimony, ſure there is no providence, or elſe it would have taken care, in caſe he had been a deceiver, that it ſhould have been as evident that he did not riſe from the dead, as now it is that he did. Though the World had been amuſed a long time with diſcourſes about him, and with ſtrange things which he was thought to do; yet here had been a nick of time at one ſtroke to have broken the force of all theſe arguments, and blaſted his credit, and undeceived the People, had there been nothing of God in it. But ſince this laſt and greateſt token did come to paſs, as was proved by witneſſes of unqueſtionable truth, it juſtified his pretences, and added ſtrength to all the former teſtimonies which had been given to him: demonſtrating him plainly to have been *a man approved of God among them, by miracles, wonders & ſigns, which God did by him in the midſt of them, as they themſelves knew.*

III. And this truly was ſo great a ſign, that his very Enemies could not but confeſs it was ſatisfactory; and a ſufficient evidence of any truth. Which may be clearly diſcern'd from hence, that they never, to this day, went about to ſhow that though he was raiſed again, yet it was not a proof that he was the CHRIST: but all their endeavour hath been to perſwade the People, that he was not raiſed again. They had no other way but to deny *this*, that ſo they might not confeſs the *other*. They were utterly undone, they knew, and muſt loſe all their reputation with the People, if he was raiſed from the dead (becauſe it would effectually prove what they denied) and therefore they hired the Souldiers to ſay, that his Diſciples ſtole him away while they ſlept. A ſtory ſo ſillily contrived (as I hope to ſhow in another place) that it it is a very great evidence, they ſhut their eyes againſt this light, for fear it ſhould ſhow them that they had been the Murderers of their CHRIST. They could not but ſay, that if he was raiſed again, he was the CHRIST; and therefore were reſolved to ſay any thing, though never ſo abſurd, rather than grant that he was raiſed to life again, which muſt ſtrike them dead.

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He was not a King for their purpoſe; and therefore they hated him and endeavoured by any means to obſcure whatſoever tended to prove his authority. He never made any ſhow of worldly greatneſs, or gave them any hope he would fight their battles againſt the *Romans*; and therefore they entred into a league againſt him, to make perpetual war with him: and ſought by all the lyes they could invent, to ſuppreſs his growing Name, and by all the cruelties they had power to uſe, to diſhearten his followers from profeſſing their belief in it. But the Apoſtles of our Lord knowing the truth of this better than they could do, and that it was a meer calumny which they ſpread abroad concerning their ſtealing his Body out of the Sepulchre; could not be deterred by any puniſhment, which they or all the power on earth could inflict, from preaching *Jeſus and the Reſurrection*. For on the one hand they ſaw it was confeſſed by malice it ſelf, that if he was raiſed from the dead, it could not be denyed that he was the CHRIST; and on the other hand they ſaw, with their own eyes, that he was raiſed from the dead, and knew it was a malicious ſlander which the Phariſees had divulged, of their breaking open the Monument of the dead. This both confirmed

their faith, and inflamed their zeal. If they had any doubts remaining, this very tale helpt to diſperſe them. But they were ſoon paſt all doubt by the coming of the Holy Ghoſt, which he ſent them, to witneſs the Reſurrection together with them. Then it was impoſſible they ſhould doubt of his being alive, when they felt his mighty power in their hearts. This diſſipated all the miſts and vapours, which had gathered about them, and darkned their underſtandings. By this Jeſus brake forth upon them in a freſh luſtre: and like the Sun, rending all the Clouds in pieces, illuminated not only them, but the whole World, in a ſhort ſpace, with the beams of his Glory.

How ſhould he do otherways, after ſuch a proof as this; which is ſo great that they could never wiſh for a greater? It is not above ſix hundred years ago, ſince a Jew called EL DAVID, gave out that he was *the Chriſt*, and drew a great many followers after him. Upon which he was apprehended and brought before an *Arabian* Prince, who askt him; *What miracle, what prodigie doſt thou ſhow that we may believe?* To which he anſwered, *Sir, cut off my head, and I will live again.* This he ſaid craftily,

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to avoid greater torments which he foreſaw would be inflicted on him, for affirming that which he could not prove. But obſerve the Princes reply, (as it is related by *Maimonides*, in a letter of his to the Jewes at *Marſeilles*, about this very buſineſs:) *Thou canſt not give us a greater ſign than this. And if it fall out ſo, that thou doſt riſe again to life after I have cut off thy head, I, and all my People (nay all the World ſure) will believe what thou ſayeſt is true; and that our Forefathers inherited nothing but vanity and lies, which did not profit them.* And preſently the experiment was made; He commanded him to be beheaded, and there was an end of his cheat. And ſo likewiſe there had been of this buſineſs which we are treating of, if Jeſus had not riſen. For he ſaid juſt as this *El David* did, Kill me, if you pleaſe; I will live again. Which ſign coming to paſs, as we have the greateſt reaſon to believe, we ought to follow the reſolution of the Prince now mentioned, by ſubmitting our ſelves to him, and heartily acknowledging him to be the Lord. When he was upon his Croſs, the Chief Prieſts, with the Scribes and Elders, ſaid, *He ſaved others,*

let him ſave himſelf. If he be the King of Iſrael, let him now come down from the Croſs, and we will believe him: xxvii. Matth. 41, 42. If our Lord had taken them at their word, we cannot tell what they would have done. But it is plain, he intended to give them a better ground of Faith than that. If they had demanded a greater thing, they ſhould have had greater ſatisfaction. If they had ſaid, *He raiſed others from the dead, let him raiſe up himſelf, after we have crucified him; let him come out of his Grave, if he be the* KING *of Iſrael*; and then have uſed all the care in the World, to ſee whether he roſe again, or no: they had been convinced and perſwaded to believe on his Name. It was not fit to do the other, becauſe he was to Dye for the Sins of the People: But this he did, though they did not ask it, to fulfill his own promiſe, and to ſhow that he was the Perſon promiſed to their Fathers. And it is ſo much greater than the other, as it is a greater thing, to be made alive again after Death, than to ſave a Man's ſelf from dying.

I hope then I may conclude with the Apoſtle S. *Paul*, that this piece of the Myſtery of Godlineſs is without controverſie, *God was manifeſt in the fleſh, Juſtified,* ὃν Πνεύματι, *in* or *by the SPIRIT.* The SPIRIT which did ſuch mighty things by *Jeſus*, and at laſt raiſed him from the dead, warranted him to be God manifeſted in our fleſh. It cleared him from all the envious and malicious accuſations of his adverſaries, while he was alive, by the many miraculous works which it wrought: and it purged him from all ſuſpicion of blaſphemy, which was charg'd againſt him, and took away his life, by raiſing from the dead, and preſenting him in Heaven a pure oblation to God. It hath acquitted him fully in all impartial mens thoughts, wiped off all the guilt which was caſt upon him, ſet him before the eyes of all the world as a perſon innocent and juſt; and made him glorious and *great even in his bloud* (as thoſe words may be rendred, xiii. *Hebr.* 20.) wherewithal he is gone into the Heavenly places, there to appear before God for us: which he would not have been able, nor ever dared to do, if he were not fully *juſtified*, and perfectly a righteous perſon.

This is that witneſs which our Saviour himſelf promiſes to *Nathanael,* as higher than that, which he had already received, i. *John* 50, 51. He was convinced of the Authority of *Jeſus,* and acknowledged him to be the King of *Iſrael,* becauſe he could ſearch into the ſecrets of the hearts, and know men at a diſtance: But our Lord tells him he ſhould *ſee greater things than theſe,* even, *behold the Heavens opened, and the Angels of God, aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of man.* That is, He ſhould have the witneſs of the SPIRIT, ſending the Angels to miniſter unto him, when he was raiſed from the dead, and when he was exalted unto Gods right hand in the Heavens.

The *Aſcenſion and Deſcenſion* of Angels is but an *Hebrew* form of ſpeech, whereby they expreſs the miniſtry and ſervice of Angels to the Divine Majeſty. A ſervant firſt goes to his Maſter to receive his orders, before he can be ſent by him; and therefore *aſcending* is put before *deſcending:* and by both is nothing elſe meant, but the miniſtry of thoſe Heavenly Creatures, that wait upon the Throne of God, and *do his Commandments, hearkening to the voice of his Word.* From thence they were ſent

ſent to attend on *Jeſus* at his Reſurrection, and at his Aſcenſion, as his Diſciples witneſſed and *Nathanael* among the reſt; for he is mentioned as a perſon preſent when *Jeſus* ſhowed himſelf to his Diſciples after his Reſurrection (xxi. *John* 2.) and is thought by many to be the ſame with S. *Bartholomew*. As *Iſrael* ſaw in a dream the Angels *aſcend and deſcend* upon a Ladder reaching from Earth to Heaven (xxviii. *Gen.* 12.) So this *true Iſraelite* (who, as *Greg. Nyſſen* * expreſſes it, ſhowed καθαρὸν ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ χαρακτῆρα τῷ Πατριάρχῃ, &c. the pure character or mark of that Patriarch upon him, in his honeſty and uprightneſs of heart) beheld the like viſion of Angels, but in a more apparent manner, when he was awake: that he might hereby be confirmed in the faith of *Jeſus*, as *Jacob* was by his viſion in the belief of God's providence. And indeed this was a great confirmation to his and to our faith. For I conceive that this phraſe ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, *upon the Son of man*, is the ſame with that where it is ſaid the Holy Ghoſt came ἐπ' αὐτὸν, *upon him*. Which as it ſignifies that he was made partaker, or rather was poſſeſſed of the Holy Ghoſt, and it became His: ſo this other like phraſe of the Angels aſcending

* *Homil.* 15. *in Cantic.*

ing and deſcending *upon him*, denotes, by the ſame reaſon, that he was made the Lord of them; and had them given to him as his miniſters and attendants, to be imployed in his ſervice. And ſo it was remarkably fulfilled which our Saviour ſaid, that he ſhould *ſee GREATER things than thoſe* he mentioned before: For hereby he knew, not only that he was the *King of Iſrael*, as he had confeſſed, *ver.* 50. but that he was the *King of Angels, the Lord of Lords.* Yea, hereby it appeared that he hath the power of God, becauſe juſt as the Angels are repreſented doing their ſervice to his Majeſty (in that xxviii. of *Geneſis*) ſo our Lord foretells with the greateſt certainty, they ſhould ſee them waiting upon him. And ſo they did, as you read in the firſt of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, *ver.* 9, 10, 11. which proved him to be indeed *the heir of all things.*

Now to ſhew a little more fully the greatneſs of this Teſtimony of the SPIRIT, and that it was greater (as *Jeſus* here ſaith to *Nathanael*) than the gift of diſcerning Spirits, which I called a gift of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to diſtinguiſh it from the *Spirit*; let us conſider a little that ſpeech of our Saviours, xii. *Matth.* 31, 32. *Where-*

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fore I ſay unto you, all manner of ſin and blaſphemy, ſhall be forgiven unto men: but the blaſphemy of the Holy Ghoſt, ſhall not be forgiven unto men, &c. Which heavy doom S. *Mark* tells us was pronounced upon them, *becauſe they ſaid, he had an unclean ſpirit*, iii. 30. This ſhows what the blaſphemy was, in which if they continued there was no hope of pardon. For if he by the *SPIRIT of God caſt out Devils* (as he tells them, *ver.* 28.) then it was rank blaſphemy, the higheſt degree of evil ſpeaking and calumny, to impute theſe very cures and wonderful works to the power of the Devil, which were wrought by that Divine power. And this ſin was therefore unpardonable, which ſhows how great this teſtimony of the SPIRIT is, becauſe there were no means left to convince them that *Jeſus* was the Son of God (without which belief their ſins could not be forgiven) if they perſiſted not only in denying the authority of the SPIRIT, but were ſo bold as to blaſpheme it. For what could work upon their hard hearts, if this proved ineffectual? might they not better deny the voices from Heaven, which they did not hear, than theſe wonderful works, which they beheld every where with their own eyes? Or

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might they not as well ſay that thoſe were deluſions, as call theſe works diabolical operations? Might they not in like manner ſlight his power of knowing ſecrets, and impute it to ſome other ſkill? What is there in which they might not ſhuffle and reſiſt the light, if in ſo clear a caſe as this, *Jeſus* his oppoſition to the Devil, caſting him out of poſſeſſion, and that on purpoſe to eſtabliſh an holy doctrine, quite contrary to his intereſt, and in a number of other miraculous works, they would be ſo obſtinate as to ſay, the Devil himſelf had the principal hand. There is no queſtion to be made, but they who were ſo perverſe as not to ſee *this finger of God*, but continued blinder than the *Egyptian* Magicians, when it did ſo many wonders, would ſhut their eyes againſt any other means of conviction, which could not be expected (it muſt alſo be remembred) becauſe God himſelf had no higher evidence to give them, than this of his *SPIRIT.*

But then you muſt not underſtand this ſpeech of our Saviour, as if he meant that thoſe perſons, to whom he ſpake theſe words, had run themſelves at that inſtant, into this unpardonable ſin: but that if they

they ſtill proceeded to blaſpheme it, when the *SPIRIT* had finiſhed its teſtimony (that is, done all thoſe things which ſtill were behind, for their conviction) then they would fall into it, and remain in it irrecoverably. For you muſt remember that under the word *SPIRIT* is comprehended the power that raiſed Chriſt from the dead, and preſented him to God in the Heavens; that he might receive of him the promiſe of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which he ſhed upon the Apoſtles abundantly, as a witneſs of his Reſurrection and glorious Exaltation. •If after this, that *Jeſus* was riſen again from the dead, aſcended into Heaven, and ſhowed himſelf to be there by ſending the *Holy Ghoſt* upon his Apoſtles, they did not believe, but ſtill blaſphemed the holy name of *Jeſus*, and the *SPIRIT* of God, ſaying, That *they* were drunk who were filled with the *Holy Ghoſt*, as here they ſaid *Jeſus* had a Devil; then they were uncapable of obtaining remiſſion of ſin, becauſe there was nothing more to be done for their converſion, but they muſt be abandoned to the hardneſs and impenitence of their hearts. This I am ſure muſt be the meaning, becauſe our Lord himſelf, after he had pronounced the *Phariſees* unpardonable, who ſpake againſt

againſt the *SPIRIT*, whereby he caſt out Devils, tells them expreſly that there was one ſign more remaining to convince them (which is a demonſtration they had not yet ſinned incurably, nor could not till that ſign was paſt) and that was the ſign, as you heard, of the Prophet *Jonas*, *ver.* 39, 40. which he grants them again, xvi. 4. ſhould not be denied them. Now every body underſtands by this, His Death, and Reſurrection, with thoſe things that followed upon it, the ſending of the Holy Ghoſt to enable his Apoſtle to go and teach all Nations, as *Jonas* went, after he came, as we may ſay, out of his grave, and preached to the great City *Nineveh*. But then this was ſtill the *SPIRIT*, that was thus continued to them (by that our Lord being raiſed, and it working wonders alſo at his Death) which if they continued to reſiſt, when it had fully done the whole office of a witneſs, and was all poured forth, then they were under the abſolute ſentence of condemnation. In brief, *To blaſpheme the SPIRIT in this comprehenſive ſenſe of the Word (including the Reſurrection, and that which followed to prove it) was the unpardonable ſin and none elſe.* And thus our Saviour's meaning is to be expounded; if one

one ſhould *ſpeak a word againſt the Son of man*, (that is Him) deſpiſing him becauſe of his poor Parentage, and calling him the *Son of a Carpenter*, or ſome ſuch name; this, though blameable, might be pardoned, *propter corporis vilitatem*, as S. *Hieron* ſpeaks, becauſe of the meanneſs of his outward appearance. Nay, if a man proceeded ſo far as to call him *a glutton, a Wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and ſinners*; this alſo might find pardon, becauſe he did not hitherto ſpeak evil of the works proper to a God, but only of thoſe belonging to a man. And more than this, ſhould he call him *deceiver* or *ſeducer*, when he heard him teach the people; it would not be unpardonable, becauſe no man is to be believed merely upon his own word. But if when theſe men ſaw the mighty works of the *SPIRIT* juſtifying his preaching to be Divine, they ſtill continued to ſpeak evil of him; this was a very dangerous blaſphemy: becauſe they could not after this call him a ſeducer or falſe Teacher, but they muſt reproach the holy *SPIRIT* as well as him, and call that the work of the Devil, which was performed by the power of the Spirit of God. And if when the HOLY GHOST was come from Heaven upon the Apoſtles, witneſſing

neſſing that he was *quickned by the SPIRIT*, and by the ſame *SPIRIT* preſented to God in the Heavens, they ſtill went on to ſpeak evil of him, then there was no hope of remiſſion, becauſe they blaſphemed the laſt remedy for their recovery, which was the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from Heaven to perſwade them to repent and believe on his name.

And that we muſt take our Saviour in this ſence, is further apparent from the name of the HOLY GHOST, which he uſes when he ſpeaks of this unpardonable ſin, never calling it the *blaſphemy againſt the SPIRIT*, but always the blaſphemy againſt the HOLY GHOST: which you know was not as yet given, when our Saviour ſpake theſe words. In the beginning of this diſcourſe, xii. *Matth.* 28. he mentions only the *SPIRIT*. But then coming to deſcribe the danger of blaſpheming it, he doth not ſay that the blaſphemy of the *SPIRIT* ſimply, that is, of thoſe preſent works of his was unpardonable: but that the blaſphemy againſt the HOLY GHOST, when it was come, ſhould never be forgiven. Which muſt needs be underſtood, as I have already argued, concerning the contempt and reproachful

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uſage of thoſe following *witneſſes*, the Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, and the preaching of the Apoſtles endowed with power from on high; becauſe though the *SPIRIT* now wrought among them, yet the HOLY GHOST was not come to be his ADVOCATE and plead his cauſe; and therefore could not as yet be blaſphemed by them. By HOLY GHOST then in our Saviour's language here, I ſuppoſe is meant all that was left ſtill to be done for his Juſtification; and that it is ſo wide a word in this place, as to include in it the *SPIRIT* alſo. For he was ſpeaking before of the *SPIRIT*, and therefore when he alters the phraſe, he doth not leave out the teſtimony of that, but imbraces it within the compaſs of a larger word: which it was neceſſary to uſe, that he might ſhow when that ſin, which they had begun in a deſperate manner, would be ſo complete, that it could never be undone. And that was when the HOLY GHOST had conſecrated the Apoſtles to their great office (which ſuppoſes his Reſurrection) and filled them with all Divine gifts: among which, you know, was a power (xiv. *John* 12.) *to do greater works than theſe*, which our Saviour is here ſpeaking of (called the *SPIRIT*:) Then if they did

not believe there was no remedy, but they must perish in their infidelity. But till then they, to whom our Saviour speaks, were not arrived at this hopeless condition, because they had hitherto only blasphemed the *SPIRIT*, not the *HOLY GHOST*, *which was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.* But when it was given, and they reproached that, as they had done the *SPIRIT*, then they were under irrecoverable condemnation: there being nothing more to be done for the opening their eyes, and perswading them, that *Jesus* was the *Son of God*. They had made a fair step to it in our Saviour's life-time, by resisting the mighty power of the *Spirit*; but it was possible they might see their error, because there was still a more mighty power behind, which first raised up and glorified *Jesus*, and then enabled his Apostles to do more wonderful things, than he had done when he was on Earth.

And therefore I observe that afterward the word HOLY GHOST is sometimes used in this large sence, for all the Power that was given the Apostles, whether of Prophecy, and Languages, or of healing and casting out Devils (which last are some-

ſometimes peculiarly called the *SPIRIT*) and ſo not to be diſtinguiſhed from the other, which it incloſes. Thus the word HOLY GHOST in ii. *Hebr.* 4. may be referred not only to *gifts* immediately preceding, but to *ſigns, wonders and miracles*, before mentioned. And after S. *Peter* and *John* had cured a lame man, they ſay the HOLY GHOST was a witneſs to *Jeſus*, v. *Acts* 31. But though this word be ſo largely uſed in ſome places (as *SPIRIT* alſo ſometimes ſignifies all the reſt, ii. *Acts* 4, 17. and ſometimes all but that which is called *power*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4.) yet commonly you will find the word HOLY GHOST having a peculiar reference to thoſe other gifts of Illumination, not of Power, iv. *Acts* 8. v. 3. vii. 55. x. 44, 45. and eſpecially xix. 2, 6. where you read that S. *Paul* found certain Diſciples at *Epheſus*, who had not ſo much as heard whether there was any HOLY GHOST, who had heard no doubt of the miraculous works both of Chriſt and his Apoſtles. Now when theſe and the HOLY GHOST were both joyned together; when *Jeſus* had given them the witneſs of his Bloud, and of his Reſurrection, and the Goſpel came *not only in POWER*, but in the HOLY GHOST, as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, 1 *Theſſ.* i. 5.

Then they who perſiſt to blaſpheme the name of *Jeſus*, were in an hopeleſs condition, paſt all the methods of God to bring them to forgiveneſs. All which I have ſaid, as diſtinctly as I could, to explain that which has perplexed ſo many, and to ſhow the ſtrength of this *Witneſs*: which our Saviour ſo much relied upon, that he knew not a greater to convince them, when once it had ſaid all that it intended in his behalf. To which let this be added, as an argument of the greatneſs of this teſtimony, that they who apoſtatized from the Chriſtian Faith, are therefore condemned to a ſorer puniſhment than they who forſook *Moſes*, not only becauſe they accounted the *BLOUD* of *Jeſus* an unholy thing, and deſpiſed that witneſs, but alſo *did deſpite to the SPIRIT of Grace*, which by raiſing him from the dead, proved his BLOUD to be the Bloud of the Son of God, x. *Hebr.* 29. This is ſet down laſt of all in that place, becauſe it filled up the meaſure of their ſin. This made them uncapable of the benefit of any ſacrifice for ſin (as it is, *ver.* 26.) that they ſo ſlighted, yea, vilified and reproached, carried themſelves contumelioufly (as the word imports) towards the *SPIRIT* of God, which was the greateſt Teſtimony on

Earth

Earth that our Saviour had, and was followed with the HOLY GHOST ſent down from Heaven. And they muſt needs be guilty of ſuch diſgraceful uſage of the *SPIRIT*, yea, of the *SPIRIT of Grace*, that Spirit which God had ſo graciouſly poured, not only upon *Jeſus*, but upon the Apoſtles, and perhaps upon themſelves, if they did deny *Jeſus*, and renounce his Religion: becauſe this was in effect to tell the world, that this was not the Spirit of God, but of the Devil, and that it did not prove his Reſurrection from the dead, but, whatſoever it ſaid, He was a blaſphemer, when he called himſelf the *Son of God*.

Thus I have done now with this laſt *Witneſs on Earth*, the *SPIRIT*: which you ſee concurs and agrees with all the former in this Truth. There is not the ſmalleſt difference between them, nothing to make us ſuſpect them to be falſe witneſſes; for they are all found (to ſpeak in our vulgar phraſe) in the very ſame ſtory, punctually, and in terms affirming this, that *Jeſus is the Son of God*. This he preached, who never did any ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth; This *John* Baptiſt likewiſe proclaimed with a loud voice;

The Bloud of *Jeſus* atteſted this before all the people; this was the very Title over his Croſs, that he was *KING OF THE JEWS*; and this the *SPIRIT* ſaid; it was the language of every one of his wonderful works; and of his Reſurrection alſo and his Inthronization (of which the Holy Ghoſt gave aſſurance) which conſpired to teſtifie this, and expreſly juſtified it to all the World. And therefore how can we chuſe but think this a ſure word [that he is the Son of God] which is eſtabliſhed out of the mouth not of two or three, but of twice three witneſſes, of unqueſtionable credit. And theſe three laſt treated of, challenge from us a very careful conſideration, and we ought the more duly to weigh what they ſay, becauſe they were *on Earth*: and upon that account, nearer to us, as I told you, more evident at firſt ſight, more ſtrongly atteſted by innumerable witneſſes, that they might ſerve for a greater confirmation, even of the truth of the reſt. The Teſtimony of the FATHER is certain, becauſe it was heard by ſeveral excellent perſons; yea, once by a multitude of people. That of the WORD alſo is infallible, and we cannot with any reaſon doubt whether there was ſuch evidence, becauſe S. *Ste-*

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ven, S. *Paul*, S. *John* were persons of unspotted reputation, who heard it, and also did and suffered the hardest things upon the credit of it. That the HOLY GHOST also fell upon him at his Baptism, a great Prophet so confidently affirmed, that it was prophaneness to deny it. But yet, excepting the Testimony of the *Holy Ghost* after his Ascension, there were none of those Witnesses in Heaven heard by so many, as these three last mentioned, who, as S. *John* says, bare witness in Earth.

It was a notorious thing to all the Country (which *Jesus* travelled) that he led a most holy life. No man could fasten the suspicion of any crime upon him, but the cry of the people was, like that when he opened a blind mans eyes, *He hath done all things well*, vii. *Mark* 37. And yet he lived not a retired life; he did not hide himself in corners, nor shut up himself in private houses: but conversed so freely, that they found fault with him (though unjustly) for being too familiar, and keeping company with Publicans and sinners. And as for his BLOUD, the second Witness on Earth, that was shed in the face of the Sun, at a great feast, when

from foreign Countries they were aſſembled at *Jeruſalem.* All the accidents, which we ſay attended his death, were things that never have been contradicted. No man then had the impudence to deny the Eclipſe of the Sun, the Earthquake, the rending of the veil of the Temple, and the reſt of the aſtoniſhing things that then hapned. The firſt of them is mentioned by a Pagan-writer; and though the Apoſtles publiſhed both that and all the other continually, yet there is no book either of *Jew* or *Gentile* (who were enemies great enough to his Religion) that goes about to diſprove them. And as for his *miraculous works*, they were generally done openly, at Feaſts, in the Synagogues, on the high-ways; and were ſo commonly talkt of, that the Rulers feared all the world would run after him, xii. *John* 19. Therefore the Apoſtles could not falſifie in the report of theſe things, but they might be eaſily confuted. Which no man ever attempted, but both *Jews* and *Gentiles* acknowledged that he wrought Miracles; for his Apoſtles alſo wrought them every where, and ſo did their Succeſſors in ſome Ages after. To theſe the Ancient Chriſtians appeal, as an undoubted teſtimony to their Faith: which they could

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not be ſo ſilly as to mention, were there any diſpute whether there had been Miracles wrought or no. His *Reſurrection* alſo was atteſted by Five hundred people, who ſaw him together at once; and it was proved beyond contradiction by the ſtrange deſcent of thoſe miraculous gifts upon his Apoſtles, according to his promiſe. Which came upon them alſo at a Feaſt, when all the Nation, though living in far diſtant Countries, were aſſembled together, and a great company of Proſelytes alſo, and devout people were preſent, to be witneſſes of it. Yea, the Apoſtles themſelves, as is notoriouſly known, went over all the world, and openly ſhowed the power of *Jeſus* which was in them.

Now if all theſe be true Witneſſes, or rather if you grant there were ſuch Witneſſes, which no ſober man can deny (they being viſible here *on Earth*, in the company of ſo much people) there can be no doubt remaining of this, that *Jeſus is the Son of God*. They proclaim this ſo loudly with one voice, that S. *John* had reaſon to ſay, *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*. They beheld it in his Preaching and Life; they beheld

beheld it in his bloudy Death, but especially in the power of his *SPIRIT* both before he died, and in raising him up from the dead: and they beheld it also, when they were with him in the holy Mount, and had the Testimony of the rest of the Heavenly Witnesses. Which were heard on Earth, though they were in Heaven; as men of high quality, and of unblemished integrity, with the hazard of all they had, did constantly affirm. And though some of those Heavenly Witnesses might not be believed so much at the first (which is the cause, I suppose, that our Saviour bids his Apostles, as you have heard, not declare what the voice from Heaven said, till after his Resurrection, xvii. *Matth.* 9.) yet when they had received such great testimony, that they were good men, and men of God, by having the Holy Ghost bestowed on them, to bestow upon others also; and when by this they were able to demonstrate his Resurrection; then all the rest that they alledged, as a proof that he was the Son of God, did highly merit belief also, and there was no reason to suspect the truth of such reports, as were verified in so authentick a manner. For *with great power gave the Apostles witness of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus*, iv. *Acts* 33. And

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the Reſurrection of the Lord *Jeſus* was a powerful Witneſs, that there was nothing ſo great ſaid of him, by the voices from Heaven, but it ought to be received as the undoubted truth of God. Who at ſundry times, and in divers manners teſtified to his Son *Jeſus*, that by ſome means or other the moſt obſtinate hearts might be convinced, and thoſe tongues which blaſphemed him, might confeſs him to be the Lord.

A Prayer.

ALL thy works praiſe thee, O holy Jeſus, they all ſhow the greatneſs of thy power, and declare thee to be the Lord. All thy Saints therefore ought to bleſs thee, and to ſpeak good of thy Name: who didſt manifeſt forth thy glory in ſuch miraculous works upon Earth, and art now crowned with ſuch glory and honour in the Heavens. Great was the glory of that Almighty love, which gave health to the ſick, feet to the lame, eyes to the blind, and life to the dead. How glorioufly didſt thou triumph over the Devil and all the

powers

powers of darkness: declaring thy self to be the Redeemer of the World, by delivering those who were oppressed by him? Great was thy Majesty, and therefore greatly to be praised. Those triumphs ought to have been attended with the most joyful shouts of Praise and Thanksgiving to thee, as the Saviour of men, and the Lord of Men and Angels. All that saw thy wonderful works, ought with never-ceasing love, to have glorified thee, the great Lover of mankind, the Repairer of our ruines, the Restorer of our happiness, our mighty Deliverer from all our Enemies, and the inexhaustible Fountain of life and all other good things, which thou every where dispensedst to them.

How ought all our hearts now to overflow with love to thee, the blessings of whose goodness so overflowed in all places, that none can tell the number of them? Especially when we remember how by the mighty working of the same Spirit which glorified thee so on Earth; thou art raised from the dead, carried to Heaven, set at the right hand of God, and made the King of glory. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. *This is the sovereign Balsam of all our wounds. This is our solace and comfort in the greatest troubles. This raises our Spirits when they*

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are oppreſſed, and gives us life in death it ſelf. Be thou honoured and acknowledged by me and by all mankind, with the humbleſt, the moſt hearty and affectionate devotion to thy ſervice. Be thou ever praiſed, as much as thou waſt reproached and blaſphemed. Let thy Name be ſweet, and mentioned with delight and joy throughout all the World. Live, O bleſſed Jeſus, *in the glory wherein thou art inthroned. Sit and reign there, till all thine Enemies become thy foot-ſtool.* For among the Gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord: neither are there any works like unto thy works. All Nations whom thou haſt made ſhall come and worſhip before thee, O Lord; and ſhall glorifie thy Name. For thou art great, and haſt done wondrous things: Thou art Lord alone.

O give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and ſtrength. Aſcribe unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: O worſhip him in the beauty of holineſs. Say among the Heathen, the Lord reigneth: who was dead, but is alive again, and liveth for evermore. O ſing unto the Lord a new ſong, ſing unto the Lord all the Earth. Yea, ſing unto the Lord a new ſong, and worſhip

ſhip him all ye Gods. For thou Lord are high above all the Earth, thou art exalted far above all Gods.

Bleſſed is the people that know this joyful ſound: they ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name ſhall they rejoyce all the day; and in thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their ſtrength, and by thy favour ſhall we be highly honoured. For thou haſt a mighty arm, ſtrong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand. I know that thou canſt do every thing, and that no thought of thine can be hindred. *Thou canſt break the chains of death, and raiſe our duſt and aſhes to immortal life. Thou canſt tread Satan under our feet, and ſend thy Angels for our ſecurity and defence. By thee we ſhall run through the greateſt dangers, and ſurmount all the difficulties that are in our way to thee.* Who ſhall ſeparate us from thy love, O Chriſt: who diedſt for us, yea rather art riſen again, who art even at the right hand of God, who alſo makeſt interceſſion for us? O *live thou for ever in my mind and heart: and be the daily delightful ſubject of my thoughts. Direct and guide me in all my ways: and lead me ſafe unto thy ſelf. Still let my meditations of*

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thee be ſweet: and my joy exceeding great in thy ſalvation. Still fix mine eyes on things above, where thou art at Gods right hand. Lord, ſtill increaſe my Faith, that it growing in ſtrength may work by a more vigorous love. Let me feel the power of thy holy Spirit perpetually in my heart: that being led by the Spirit, and mortifying thereby the deeds of the body; He that raiſed thee up from the dead, may alſo quicken my mortal body, by his Spirit that dwelleth in me: Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that wrought ſuch wonders, unto him be glory in the Church by Chriſt *Jeſus*, throughout all ages, world without end. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the Witneſs of the Holy APOSTLES of our Lord.

I Know not what remains to be done for the full explication of theſe words of the Apoſtle, unleſs it be fit to note that our Saviour is ſaid to COME not only in his own Perſon, but likewiſe in his Apoſtles and Evangeliſts. I need name but one place to prove this, ii. Epheſ. 17. *And* CAME, *and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.* It is well known that Jeſus (of whom he there ſpeaks) was *not* SENT *ſave to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael:* and therefore in his own Perſon was not to go to thoſe who were afar off (ſuch Gentiles as theſe *Epheſians* were) to whom notwithſtanding he is ſaid here to COME.

He came unto his own (ſaith this very Diſciple) and though his own received him not, yet he kept himſelf within the confines of their Country; and charged his Diſciples, during his life, not to go into any City of the *Samaritans*: to whom he never went, but only in his paſſage from one part of the Jews Country to another. We can give no account then of his COMING *to them that were afar off*, as well as unto the Jews *who were nigh*, but only this; that by the Apoſtles whom *he* ſent, and who were *his* Embaſſadors to preach the glad tidings of Salvation, he was made known to the Gentiles; even as the Father is ſaid to *come* to the Jews and to ſpeak to them, when he ſent him, his Son, to declare his mind and will among them.

Now it is poſſible that S. *John* might have ſome reſpect to his ſending them (as the Father ſent him) to prove him to be the Son of God; when he ſaith that *Jeſus CAME by WATER and by BLOUD and by the SPIRIT*, and that theſe three were *his WITNESSES on Earth*. For firſt the Apoſtles were his WITNESSES; as they are called in many places, both by him and by themſelves. *Ye ſhall be WITNESSES*

NESSES unto me, both in Jeruſalem and in Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermoſt parts of the Earth, ſays our Saviour, juſt before his Aſcenſion, i. Act. 8. The ſame he ſaid to S. *Paul,* to whom he appeared afterward, xxvi. 16. xxii. 15. And in the ſame ſtile S. *Peter* ſpeaks of himſelf, *I exhort you, who am an Elder, and a WITNESS of the ſufferings of Chriſt,* i. Pet. v. 1. And as they were witneſſes of his *ſufferings;* ſo they were of all that he did (as you ſhall hear preſently) and of all that was done for him to prove that he was the Son of God, and the King of Glory. That is, they were witneſſes that there appeared ſuch witneſſes both in Heaven and Earth for him, as we have examined. And (2.) *witneſſes* they were of very great credit, worthy of all belief. For they were *WITNESSES choſen of God,* x. *Act.* 41. ſelect Men, pickt out by Heaven, ſome of them in an extraordinary manner, for this purpoſe. And they ſpake nothing by hear-ſay, but upon their own certain knowledge; being *eye-witneſſes of his Majeſty,* as ye have heard before from S. *Peter,* 2. i. 16. And S. *John* ſays the ſame in this Epiſtle, iv. 14. *We have ſeen, and do teſtifie, that the Father ſent the Son to be the Saviour of the World.* Firſt they ſaw, and then

bare witneſs: Or as he expreſſes himſelf more largely in the beginning of the Epiſtle, *That which they had heard, and ſeen with their eyes, and looked upon, and which their hands had handled of the Word of life (for it was manifeſt, and they ſaw it and bare WITNESS) that* (he repeats it again) *which they had ſeen and heard, they declared* unto the World. Why ſhould not ſuch witneſſes be believed; who ſpake nothing but what all their ſenſes, that could be imployed in this caſe, gave them full aſſurance was undoubtedly true? They were Men ſure of common capacity; and they had opportunity alſo to ſee and hear and feel and examine every thing, which Jeſus did, or was done in honour of him. For therefore our Saviour choſe them to be his *witneſſes*, becauſe they were thus qualified. xv. Joh. 26, 27. *When the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He ſhall teſtify of me: And ye alſo ſhall bear WITNESS, becauſe ye have been with me from the BEGINNING.* That is, becauſe you are abundantly informed, how all things have paſſed, from my very firſt entring into the World to preach the Goſpel; therefore you ſhall be imployed to teſtifie all things that you have ſeen and heard and felt, as

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the fitteſt perſons to be believed. For which reaſon, when they wanted one of their Number, by the apoſtaſie of *Judas*, they were very careful, according to this Rule of their Maſter, to chuſe ſuch an one to ſucceed him, as had been a conſtant follower of Jeſus, and had taken notice of every thing they were to witneſs. i. *Act.* 21, 22. *Wherefore ſaith S. Peter, of thoſe men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jeſus went in and out among us, beginning from the Baptiſm of John unto that ſame day that he was taken up from us, muſt one be ordained to be a WITNESS with us of his Reſurrection.* See here how exact they were in their choice, that there might be no exception taken againſt their teſtimony, if any one ſhould ask them; Did you your ſelf *ſee*, or did you *hear* this, which you report? They would have none to take a part with them in this chief Miniſtry of the Goſpel, but ſuch an one as had been with them from firſt to laſt, and was able to anſwer to ſuch a queſtion upon his own certain knowledge, that all was true which he preached. From them the *Evangeliſts* received their Leſſon; who could ſay that they had theſe things which they reported, from thoſe very Men who were preſent

when they were ſpoken or done: And ſome of the *Evangeliſts* who were of the LXX. Diſciples choſen by our Saviour (x. *Luke* 1.) could affirm all upon the credit of their own ſight or hearing. But the other was ſufficient, as S. *Luke* thought; who undertaking to write the Hiſtory of our Saviour's Life and Death and Reſurrection (though he was none of the XII. Apoſtles) ſays, that he intended to declare thoſe things *which were moſt ſurely believed among them*, even as they were delivered to him, by thoſe Perſons, who *from the beginning, were EYE-WITNESSES and Miniſters of the Word.* i. 1, 2. Where it is obſervable, that as he would truſt only ſuch perſons as had been *eye-witneſſes*, ſo none but thoſe who had been ſuch witneſſes *from the beginning.* And (3.) what it was that they *witneſſed* (which is to be next conſidered) I have already told you in their own words, all that Jeſus did from the beginning, and particularly *his Reſurrection* which concluded all. This you may obſerve they teſtified to the *Jewes*, ii. *Act.* 22. 32. how God had honoured him by *Miracles, wonders and ſigns which he wrought by him in the very midſt of them, as they could not deny*: and *this Jeſus*, ſaith S. *Peter, hath God raiſed up,*

whereof

whereof we are all WITNESSES. And ſo he preached to the Gentiles, as I have noted before, x. 39. 41. *We are* WITNESSES *of all things which he did, &c. whom they ſlew and hanged on a Tree: Him God raiſed up the third day and ſhewed him openly unto* WITNESSES *choſen before of God, even unto us, who did eat and drink with him after he roſe from the dead.* And ſo does S. *Paul*, xiii. 30, 31. *But God raiſed him from the dead, and he was ſeen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jeruſalem, who are his* WITNESSES *unto the People.* He alledges their teſtimony, I ſuppoſe, rather than his own (though he alſo had ſeen the Lord, 1 *Cor.* xv. 8.) becauſe they had been with him *from the beginning*, which he had not: but *was born out of due time*, or was *an abortive*, as the word is well rendred in the Margin of that place now quoted. He was not formed, that is, and faſhioned as the reſt of the Apoſtles were under our Saviour's diſcipline, nor grew by leiſurely inſtruction in the Chriſtian Religion to the dignity of an Apoſtle; as Children come by degrees to perfection and maturity in their Mothers womb: but was thruſt into the Church on a ſudden, and by an heavenly violence, not in a regular way, made

an Apoſtle when he was not at all diſpoſed for it. Being born an Apoſtle therefore thus late (after *Chriſt*'s aſcenſion) and thus haſtily (before he was informed by any Teacher of Chriſtianity) he could not ſay that he had ſeen all the wonderful works of Chriſt when he was alive, or heard his Sermons, or received the hiſtory of them from eye and ear witneſſes. But all this was ſupplied by this one wonderful work of his converſion, in ſuch a manner as I formerly deſcribed, and by thoſe inſtructions which he received immediately from Jeſus himſelf. This was ſo ſtrange a thing that it made him one of his prime Miniſters; becauſe the Goſpel which he preached, *He neither received it of man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.* Who ſo fully ſatisfied and inform'd him; that there was no need to conſult any mortal Creature, nor to go for inſtructions or authority to thoſe who were Apoſtles before him: but immediately he went about his buſineſs, and became *his WITNESS to all men, of what he had ſeen and heard:* as you may read, i. *Gal.* 12. 16, 17. xxii. *Act.* 15. And both He and the reſt (which is the chief thing to be conſidered) aſſerted that which they preached, that is, proved *Jeſus to be the Son of God*

God with Power, all theſe ways by which S. *John* ſays our Saviour came, by WATER, by BLOUD, and by the SPIRIT: as will be evident, if I give you but a brief account of every one of theſe.

1. And as for the Holineſs and *purity* of their *Doctrine*, I have given you an abſtract of it before. By which it is apparent, they taught nothing but ſuch a love of God, as made thoſe that learnt it the greateſt and moſt vertuous lovers of all Mankind. Whom they purſued with kindneſſes, even when they hated them; and prayed for and bleſt, when they perſecuted them and drove them away, and would no longer receive any of their other kindneſſes. For they were inſtructed by the Apoſtles to bear all injuries with perfect patience; to be contented with the preſent, and truſt God for the future; to live peaceably with the worſt natur'd people, and to exerciſe the divineſt Friendſhip with thoſe who were good. Whom they taught to *be all of one mind*, as much as the beſt Husbands and Wives are, *to have compaſſion one of another, to be loving, pittiful and courteous*; as you may read in 1. Pet. iii. 7, 8.

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The reſt of their Precepts were like theſe; and their *Lives* were correſpondent: as all the World knew, who could never charge them with any fault but this (as they accounted it) that they preached Jeſus. There was nothing appeared that could give the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion of any baſe or unworthy deſign, which they hid under pious and holy words. But their converſation had been very innocent and unblameable in the places where they lived, when they were *private* men. None could charge them with forgery, theft, covetouſneſs, or any other crime. But *S. Paul*, for inſtance, a moſt eminent Perſon among them, was of ſuch ſtrictneſs, during the time he was a *Jew*, that he was blameleſs, as to the righteouſneſs which their Law required. And when they were drawn out of their obſcure privacy, and ſent as *publick* perſons, to preach and act in the Name of Jeſus, they were ſo far from ſerving any worldly ends, that they took nothing for all their pains, nor demanded one farthing for any of their Cures. They were able not only to challenge all the world, as that great Prophet *Samuel* had done his Nation, that the man would come forth and witneſs againſt them,

them, and ſay, if he could, whom they had wronged; but of whom they had expected any gratuity for all their kindneſs to them. That was all that *Samuel* ſaid, *Whoſe Oxe or Aſs have I taken? whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppreſſed? or of whoſe hand have I received any bribe? and I will reſtore it you:* 1. xii. 3. And *Moſes*, in that great rebellion againſt him, xvi. *Num.* 15. thinks it ſufficient to purge himſelf in the ſame manner, ſaying, *I have not taken one Aſſe from them, nor hurt one of them.* But *S. Paul* makes a more noble proteſtation, ſaying, *I have COVETED no mans ſilver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, you your ſelves know, that theſe hands have miniſtred unto my neceſſities, and to them that were with me,* xx. *Act.* 33, 34. Here was Vertue; which made him ſo far even from deſiring any thing of others, that he choſe by his own hard labour to be both his own benefactor, and his Families. And what he affirms of himſelf, he alſo tells us was the pious inclination of ſeveral of his Companions; ſuch as *Silvanus*, and *Timotheus*. Whoſe exhortation, the *Theſſalonians* knew, *was not of deceit, nor of uncleanneſs, nor of guile; for they ſtudied not to pleaſe men, but God. Unto whom they appeal as their Witneſs, that they never*

ver uſed any flattering words, nor ſought to inrich themſelves, or to advance their own glory, as you read, 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 3, 4, 5. And *they were witneſſes*, he adds, verſ. 10. *as well as God, how holily, and juſtly and unblameably, yea, how lovingly* (as it follows verſ. 11.) *they behaved themſelves among them.*

Now what ſhould tempt ſuch pious Men, who ſo much deſpiſed worldly goods, and ſought not to get any credit to themſelves, to preach that *Jeſus was the Son of God*; if they had not been very ſure of this truth, which was the conſtant matter of their Sermons, throughout the World? Is it likely that ſuch Men ſhould feign a ſtory of things, which they never heard nor ſaw? that all their talk of voices from Heaven, and Miracles, and appearances of Jeſus to them after he was dead, were only devices and contrivances of their own brain? For what end, I beſeech you, ſhould they invent them? If their tongues were ſo well hung, and they were ſo eloquent as to hope to perſwade the world to be of their mind, it had been wiſdome to have imployed them more for their own gain and advantage; and not to have preached ſuch a ſtrange and unprofitable Doctrine

as

as this of the crucified Jeſus. There were far eaſier tasks to undertake than this, and which would have turn'd to a better account here on earth: and therefore they who had ſo much wit as to invent, would have let this alone; had they not known it to be both ſure and undoubted, and alſo worthy of all their pains to reveal it, that this crucified Jeſus was the Son of God.

But beſides this it ought to be conſidered, that from the very beginning our Saviour had taught them to be content with a mean and poor kind of life, when he ſent them forth to preach in *Judæa*. *Go*, ſays he, x. *Matth.* 7. 9, 10. *preach and ſay, the Kingdom of God is at hand.* Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor ſilver, nor ſo much as a braſs token in your purſes; nor ſcrip for your Journey; neither two Coats; neither ſhoes, nor yet ſtaves. For the Workman is worthy of his Meat: and eat ſuch things as they ſet before you. That is, be not curious; and, doubt not of it, God will provide for you. Was it likely that men thus bred, to ſo great plainneſs, ſimplicity, contentedneſs, and dependence on God, ſhould go about to abuſe the world with falſe ſto-

ries?

ries? Nay, before they came to him, their education and way of life was ſo low and poor; that they were the unfitteſt men in the world to deviſe and make *Romances*, if they ſhould have had a mind to it. This was the very thing, the Heathens objected to them, that they were illiterate, not trained up in ſtudy, but got their living many of them, *Piſcatorio artificio*, as they ſpeak in *Lactantius*, by the trade and labour of fiſhing. Of which He makes this advantage very juſtly, in his reply to them,

* *Lib.* 3. *Inſtit. c.* 3. *Abfuit ergo ab his fingendi voluntas* *, &c. "You muſt needs confeſs therefore that "theſe Men had not the inclination, nor "the craft to contrive and feign ſuch a ſto- "ry as this; becauſe they were ſo rude. "Or what unlearned Man is there, that "can deviſe things ſo coherent, and that "ſute ſo well one with another? ſince e- "ven the moſt excellent of all your Philo- "ſophers, as we ſee plainly, have involved "themſelves in many contradictions; and "ſpoken things contrary and repugnant to "what they have elſewhere delivered. "*For this is the nature of lies, that they* "*never hang well together.* One end of "the tale, is wont to diſcover the falſe- "neſs of the other. But what they deli- "ver, *undique quadrat*, perfectly agrees "with

"with it ſelf from top to bottom, becauſe "it is true, and no device of their own. "And then he adds (which is the greateſt "evidence that can be of their honeſty) "they could not invent this for the ſake of "any thing in this world, (and without "ſome ſuch reſpect what ſhould incline "them to invent it) for as much as they "both taught and followed that courſe of "life which regarded not ſenſual pleaſures, "and undervalued thoſe things, which the "world admires and cries up for goods; "and likewiſe they dyed for the Faith, "which was not the effect of a raſh and "ſudden fit of zeal, for they knew very "well and foretold they ſhould dye upon "this account; and they alſo reſolvedly "ſuffered the moſt cruel and ſharpeſt tor-"ments that could be deviſed before they "dyed; and they took it all patiently, "nay gave God thanks that they were "counted worthy to ſuffer for the Name "of Jeſus.

But this belongs to the Teſtimony of their BLOUD. To which before I proceed, let me obſerve that the Apoſtles were not only men of great knowledge in the things of God, and very innocent and holy in their lives; but they were men extraordinarily

dinarily qualified in both those regards: and therefore are the more to be believed, in what they say they *saw* or *heard*. For what Philosopher ever spake so plainly and clearly of all things that concern the amendment of Mankind, or gave them such hopes in the World to come, without which it was not likely they should amend, as these poor Fishermen did? They wanted nothing but their eloquence, which they purposely avoided; because they would have naked truth prevail by its own force and by the power of God; and not by those ornaments and dressings, which had been so often imployed to commend falshood to the World. Setting this aside, there was no comparison between the Doctrine of the Apostles, and that which had been formerly published. They comprehended in a few plain and simple words, more than all that could be found here and there scattered in the vast Volumes of the Philosophers. Nay, they advanced the sence of the Law of *Moses*. They called Men to the noblest degree of purity. For they cleansed and scowred them from all filthiness, not only of the flesh, but also of the spirit. They advanced the business of holy living to such a pitch, that some said it was impossible

to

to be ſo good. And what did they do now? How did they overcome this objection? This is the greateſt marvel of all, and gave their teſtimony a mighty force: they ſhow'd by their own example that it was poſſible. This, ſays *Lactantius*, made the Philoſophers miſcarry in their deſign, that though they ſpake well, yet they did not live as they taught. *For men had rather have examples than words:* Becauſe it is eaſie to talk, and hard to do. Our Saviour therefore and his Apoſtles convinced men by their actions; that *if they would not follow one that taught them, they might follow one that went before them.* They guided them by their feet and not only by their tongues; they led their hearers the way, in all manner of vertuous and godly living. Nay, they refuſed ſometimes, to do thoſe things which they might lawfully, that all men might ſee their upright meaning, and that they had no worldly deſign in their head. So S. *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, that whereas he might have lived upon the Goſpel and expected maintenance from them; yet he choſe to preach freely, and *make the Goſpel without charge*, that it might have an eaſier paſſage into their hearts, 1 Cor. ix. 12. 18. And thus he did at *Theſſalonica* alſo, where he *wrought*

with labour and travel Night and Day, that he might not be chargeable to any of them: Not becauſe he had not power to do otherwiſe, *but to make himſelf an example unto them to follow him*, 2 Theſſ. iii. 8, 9. And ſuch was his practice, you heard before, at *Epheſus*, xx. *Act.* 34. So that one would think he had taken up this generous reſolution, at the very firſt, which he continued every where, not to make the ſmalleſt advantage by the Goſpel of which he was a Miniſter. It might have been ſufficient, one would think, that he laboured in the Goſpel, and took pains to convert ſouls: He needed not have laboured alſo for his living, but expected food from thoſe whom he fed with the bread of life. But to make his Miniſtry unexceptionable, and to ſhow he intended nothing in the World, but to bring men to this belief in Jeſus; he would not ſo much as ſupport himſelf by their contributions, but by the labour of his own hands provided both for himſelf and for others too; as he tells the *Epheſian* Elders, who were inſtruments with him of their Salvation. Can there be any ſuſpicion of the ſincerity of ſuch a Man as this? What could he have in his mind but this one thing, to win Diſciples to his Maſter? And could he doubt, think you, of his

power

power to reward him for all his labour? He was no fool it is plain, but underſtood himſelf as well as the wiſeſt of us all. What ſhould make him then neglect all other intereſts, and bend his mind wholly to ſerve *Jeſus?* Such noble ſpirits as his were the unlikelieſt of all other to cheat and deceive, whoſe only buſineſs it was to take pains, that they might give to others. And men of ſuch wiſdom would not have taken all that pains, for no other end, but merely to perſwade others to believe in *Jeſus*, if they had not been as ſure that he was the *Son of God*, as it was that they ſhould get nothing by preaching it, but ſtripes, impriſonments, infamy, reproaches, and perhaps loſe their lives to the bargain. And what ſhould make men ſo prodigal of their bloud think you?

II. That's now fit to be conſidered in the next place; their ſharp ſufferings, the BLOUD whereby our Saviour CAME, (that is, was proved to be the *Chriſt*) when he was preached by their Miniſtery. No ſooner did they appear, but all the world with its whole power armed it ſelf againſt them. As the *Jews* under pretence of Religion oppoſed and perſecuted them; ſo when they fled into other Coun-

tries, the *Philoſophers* upon the ſame ſcore, ſet their wits againſt them, and ſummoned all their Learning and their Arts of reaſoning to diſpute this new Doctrine out of doors. To whoſe aſſiſtance came the *Sophiſters* and *Rhetoricians*, who imployed all their quirks and their eloquence to make it ſeem ridiculous. Nor did the *Magicians* and Juglers, with all the *Dæmons*, the then Lords of the world, forget to oppoſe it with all their might. But excited Kings, and Preſidents, and Magiſtrates to exerciſe all kind of cruelties, not only againſt the preachers of this Religion, but againſt their followers. The Edicts of Princes thundred out nothing but confiſcations, proſcriptions, baniſhments, impriſonments, rods, axes, ſtrapadoes, croſſes, fire, wild-Beaſts: ſo that we may ſay of them all, as it was ſaid of S. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who were *men that hazarded their lives for the name of the Lord* Jeſus, xv. *Acts.* 26. Men *ſet forth, appointed unto death* (as thoſe that fought with wild-Beaſts) *and made a ſpectacle unto the World, and to Angels and Men,* 1 Cor. iv. 9. *Even unto this preſent hour* (ſays S. *Paul* in the following verſes) *we both hunger and thirſt, and are naked, and are buffetted, and have no certain dwelling*

ling place; and labour working with our own hands: being reviled we bleſs: being perſecuted, we ſuffer it: being defamed, we intreat (God for them:) *we are made as the filth of the World, and are the off-ſcouring of all things unto this day.* And as they were long thus vilely uſed and deſtined to death, ſo at laſt every one of them, together with other great ſervants of *Jeſus* Chriſt, actually ſuffered death in juſtification of this truth, that he was the *Son of God.* S. *Steven* led the way, who is called the *Martyr of Jeſus*, having ſhed his *Bloud* for him, xxii. *Acts* 20. And he that calls him ſo, proteſts that he was *ready not only to be bound, but alſo to die at Jeruſalem for his name*, xxi. 13. Nay, when he ſpeaks of the Martyrdom of S. *Steven*, he was in the hands of his enraged enemies, who were ready to ſtone him too, and began to prepare themſelves for it, as you may read there xxii. 23. And both before and after this he was perſecuted with ſuch violent and bitter zeal, that his whole life was a kind of death, which he ſuffered over and over again for his Maſters cauſe. Which makes him ſay, when he gives a large catalogue of his ſufferings, that he was *in deaths often*, 2 *Cor.* xi. 23, 25. and proteſt, in another place, that *he died daily*, 1 *Cor.*

xv. 31. and in another, that he was *alway delivered unto death for Jeſus's ſake*, and that *death wrought in him*, that he might make others live, 2 *Cor.* iv. 11, 12. More than this you find in xvii. *Rev.* 5, 6. that the mother of harlots, that one City *Babylon*, was even *drunk with the* BLOUD *of the Saints, and with the* BLOUD *of the* MARTYRS *of Jeſus*. A Sea of BLOUD flowed from their veins, to cover the Earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord; for whoſe cauſe they ſuffered themſelves to be ſlain, as ſo many innocent ſheep that make no reſiſtance. This gave them the name of MARTYRS, in Engliſh WITNESSES, becauſe *they were beheaded for the* WITNESS *of Jeſus, and for the Word of God*, xx. *Rev.* 4. that is, they conſtantly affirmed him to be the LORD, and choſe rather to die and ſeal it with their BLOUD, than not preach this Truth; for which S. *John* alſo was now an Exile in a deſolate place, 1 *Rev.* 9.

What was it, think you, that made them thus hot and eager to be the moſt miſerable of all mankind? to deſpoil themſelves of all the comforts of life, and to endure perpetually the pains of death? From

From what cauſe was it, that their bloud thus boiled in their veins, and they were ſo zealouſly forward to have it let out? It could be nothing but only this, that they loved *Jeſus* ardently, and were extremely deſirous, if he thought it beſt to die in his ſervice: knowing that he would hear the cry of their *bloud*, and reward them abundantly for all their ſufferings. S. *John* beheld the *Souls of thoſe who were ſlain for the Word of God, and the* TESTIMONY *which they held, under the Altar*, vi. *Rev.* 9. which ſignifies that they were ſacrifices to God, when they witneſſed thus unto *Jeſus*. For by *Souls* in the language of the old Scriptures, is often meant the *Bloud*, *i. e.* the life, which here was repreſented at the foot of the Altar, where the bloud of the ſacrifice uſed to be poured out. They died in an holy cauſe, they were very well aſſured, and ſhould be an offering well pleaſing, and of a ſweet ſavour unto God; elſe they would never have thus willingly offered their throats to the ſacrificing knife of their bloudy perſecutors. No, when it came to that, they would have confeſt the truth ſure, if they had not preached it before. A few of their ſufferings would have taught them more wit than *to loſe their heads for the teſtimony of*

Jeſus; if they had not been verily perſwaded they were in the right, and ought to be his WITNESSES even with their bloud. The ſcoffs of the Heathen would have been very reaſonable, if they had not dealt ſincerely, and been certain their Teſtimony was the Truth. Who were wont to ſay, as we read in *Minutius*, *Nec reſurgitis miſeri, nec interim vivitis*, Miſerable wretches! you do but fancy you ſhall riſe again, and in the mean time you do not live. You are hungry, and pale, and enjoy none of the pleaſures of life; and have no hope of being better you are dead. To which, he replies, after a long demonſtration of the evidence they had of what they believed, *Ita beati reſurgimus, & futuri contemplatione jam vivimus*, So you ſee we ſhall riſe again to bleſſedneſs, and we live now in the bliſsful contemplation of it. Yea, they not only *lived*, but they *rejoyced*: and more than that, they *gloried* in tribulations. Which they could not have done, had not their integrity been as great as this confidence, and their ſincere intentions upheld and ſupported their boldneſs. Which was the greater, you may be ſure, becauſe as they bare *witneſs* to *Jeſus*, ſo *God bare WITNESS to them*, as you read expreſly, ii. *Heb.* 4.

both

both with ſigns and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, according to his will: whereby he teſtified to them that they were honeſt men, and did not *cunningly follow deviſed fables, when they made known to men the power and coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but were,* as the profeſſed, *eye-witneſſes of his Majeſty.* Which is the next thing to be conſidered.

III. Hitherto I have only proved that they had all things neceſſary to make them *credible witneſſes,* being void of guile, and ſuch as could not be reaſonably ſuppoſed to be mere inventors of what they preached. Men who both knew what they ſaid, and did not ſpeak contrary to their knowledge. Nay, men of eminent knowledge, ſanctity and zeal, which made them more than *common witneſſes.* But ſtill they were only *humane* Witneſſes, not *divine:* nor could all this put it quite out of doubt, and give a full aſſurance, that what they ſaid was true; but only that they thought it to be true, and were not likely to be deceived. And therefore that they and thoſe who heard their teſtimony, might be ſure, and have infallible proofs (as S. *Lukes* words are) that they were not

not deceived; and that the faith which relied upon their teſtimony might be Divine: there followed the *Witneſs of the SPIRIT*, which accompanied them, as it had done our Saviour; together with the Witneſs of the HOLY GHOST, which he had promiſed to ſend them, that they might be his *Witneſſes* in all the world. This was an undoubted evidence that they were men ſent of God upon this meſſage, to preach *Jeſus*, and teſtifie that he was the Lord of all. This made the faith of thoſe who heard and believed them, to be more than an humane perſwaſion, becauſe it relied not only on the word of men, but upon the teſtimony of the Spirit of God. It might have been a very ſtrong faith without this, becauſe the men who reported it were perſons of great vertue, void of all fraud, or worldly deſign: but it could not have been Divine, had not this Witneſs come and joyned its teſtimony with theirs. For they would but have received the teſtimony of very pious and good men: it was no more, till the teſtimony of God himſelf came, in ſuch ſigns, wonders, miracles and various gifts, as you have heard already, and as you read of in many other places. *They went forth* (ſaith S. *Mark*, ſpeaking of all the Apoſtles)

Apoſtles) *and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word* (which they preached) *with ſigns following*, xvi. 20. All places were filled with wonder, as they were with the HOLY GHOST. At *Jeruſalem*, for inſtance, S. *Steven* as well as the Apoſtles, *full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people*, vi. *Acts* 8. In *Samaria* S. *Philip* preached Chriſt, *and the people with one accord gave heed to the things which he ſpake, hearing and ſeeing the miracles which he did; for unclean Spirits crying with a loud voice, came out of many that were poſſeſſed with them, and many taken with palſies, and that were lame were healed*, viii. 6, 7. And at *Theſſalonica* S. *Paul* tells them that *his Goſpel came not in word only, but alſo in power, and in the Holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance.* And at *Iconium* both he and *Barnabas* ſtai'd a long time, *ſpeaking boldly in the Lord, who gave teſtimony unto the Word of his grace, and granted ſigns and wonders to be done by their hands*, xiv. 3. And in the ſame manner, at *Corinth*, *Coloſſe*, *Philippi*, and all other places, the Divine power *wrought in them mightily*, i. *Coloſ.* 29. upon which account they call themſelves, with great reaſon, *Witneſſes OF GOD*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 14,

14, 15. *If Chriſt be not riſen, our preaching is vain, yea, and we are found falſe witneſſes of God* (which had been a moſt horrible thing) *becauſe we have teſtified OF GOD, that he raiſed up Chriſt.* They teſtified every where what God had done by *Jeſus* and for him; particularly that he had raiſed him from the dead. Now that they did not take upon them to be *Gods Witneſſes*, when they had received no authority from him, nor were guilty of belying God (as the phraſe κατὰ θεοῦ imports) the Spirit that wrought in them evidently proved, by the gifts of Languages, of Prophecy, of Wiſdom and Knowledge, of Miracles, and healing all manner of Diſeaſes. Which made the Angel ſay, when S. *John* was going to worſhip him, by no means, ſee thou do it not: I am but thy fellow ſervant, one of thy Brethren that *bears witneſs* to *Jeſus* as thou doſt: *For the teſtimony of Jeſus is the ſpirit of prophecy*, xix. *Rev.* 10. that is, thoſe gifts which the Apoſtles were endued withal, ſhowed whoſe miniſters they were, and that being the ſervants of the moſt High God, as well as the Angels, they owed no ſuch reſpect to them as S. *John* was about to give: and by thoſe Divine gifts they gave a *teſtimony* to *Jeſus*, and proved he was the

Son

Son of God; wherein they were equal to the Angels, who could no more than teſtifie to him, and be his miniſters to report the glory wherein he was. Upon which errand not only this, but many other Angels appeared to S. *John*, who, together with the reſt of the Apoſtles, *bare record of the Word of God*, as I have noted before, *and of the teſtimony of Jeſus, and of all things that he ſaw*, i. *Rev.* 3. And herein they were *labourers together with God*, (1 *Cor.* iii. 9.) who teſtified the ſame, and *wrought as effectually* in S. *Peter* among the *Jews*, as he was *mighty in S.* Paul *towards the Gentiles*, ii. *Gal.* 8. For *God wrought ſpecial miracles by his hands*, xix. *Acts* 11. *and made the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty ſigns and wonders, by the power of the* SPIRIT *of God*, xv. *Rom.* 18, 19. So that the Faith of that Age, it is plain, *did not ſtand in the wiſdom of men* (as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* ii. 5.) *but in the power of God.* They that believed ſaw evidently that God was with the Apoſtles: nay, they felt, many of them, the power of God in themſelves, as you have heard before; when the Apoſtles communicated this vertue to others, which they had received from *Jeſus* Chriſt. Which was ſuch a *Teſtimony* to him,

him, as no counterfeit or falſe witneſs could ever imitate.

For it hath been a conſtant obſervation, that they who by Magick aſtoniſhed the People by wonderful feats, not only did them for their own gain and reputation, rather than for any benefit to the World; but alſo kept this ſecret to themſelves, and would not communicate their power to others. That would have ſpoiled their trade, and made them leſs admired, or at leaſt, leſs rich than they deſigned. But our Lord, on the contrary, had promiſed his Diſciples, that what he did when he was in the world, they ſhould do alſo, after he was gone. Nay, more than that, he tells them, *Greater things ſhall ye do.* And which is ſtill more, he promiſes that not only they, but others alſo ſhould do thoſe works, if they believed on him. xiv. Joh. 11, 12. *Believe me for the very works ſake. Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do, ſhall he do alſo, and greater works than theſe ſhall he do; becauſe I go to my Father.* Now thus it came to paſs, as our Saviour foretold. Not only the Apoſtles, but others alſo who believed through their word, received the Holy Ghoſt. For as S. *Peter* confidently invited

invited his Crucifiers, to come and repent of what they had done, and be baptized *every one of them* in his Name, and they ſhould *receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt*, ii. *Act.* 38. So it proved, that they who gladly received his word, were baptized, *(ver.* 41.*) and were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt:* iv. 31. This was the thing that amazed that famous Sorcerer *Simon Magus*, whom the *Samaritans* admired as *the great power of God*, till S. *Philip* came thither, and perſwaded even him, by the miracles and ſigns which he did, to believe in Jeſus, as a greater power of God than himſelf. But when the Apoſtles alſo came, and by laying on of their hands the Holy Ghoſt was given to ſeveral perſons; He plainly ſaw that he was no body, and would have given any Money for ſuch a power, as he had not the leaſt ſhadow of. viii. *Act.* 10, 11, *&c.*

But all that I ſhall ſay of this matter, ſhall be out of one of the ancient defenders of the Chriſtian cauſe: who thought he might challenge all the world to ſhow him any thing like that which our Saviour did; or give an account how it might be done, if he was not the Son of God moſt high. It is *Arnobius* I mean, who in his firſt Book againſt

againſt the Gentiles, having delivered in a Catalogue of our Saviour's miracles, and ſhown they could not be the effect of Magick; at laſt concludes with this great demonſtration, the ſubſtance of which I ſhall briefly relate. All theſe wonders which I have ſummed up, though not as the greatneſs of them required, Jeſus not only performed himſelf; but, which is a greater miracle, gave many others power to do them in his Name. For he fore-ſeeing there would be indeavours to detract from the glory of his famous actions, that he might leave no ſuſpicion in the minds of thoſe that heard of him, as if he were a Sorcerer, choſe out of that vaſt multitude of People that followed him with no ſmall admiration, certain Fiſhermen, poor Labourers, and other Country People; who going through all Nations might, without any tricks, falſe colours, or invoking the aſſiſtance of Spirits, work all thoſe miracles over again, which they ſaid he had wrought himſelf. As *He* commanded Devils to come out with a word of his mouth; in the ſame manner did *they* lay their commands upon them, and they obeyed. As He did but put forth his hand and touch a Leper, or bid him be clean, and his fleſh was reſtored like a little Childs; in the

ſame

ſame manner did *they* ſmooth the skins of ſuch loathſome perſons, and reſtore them to the welcome ſociety of their friends and neighbours. It would be too tedious to number all things particularly that they did; and which is more (I may add) gave power to other Chriſtians to do in their Maſter's Name. They ſtopt the progreſs of cruel eating Cancers; they cloſed up *Ulcera oris immenſi*, wide and very gaping Ulcers; they gave feet to the lame, eyes to the blind, and life to the dead. Nor was there any thing, that aſtoniſhed all beholders, done by him; which he did not ſubject to the power of theſe infants, theſe ruſticks, and gave them authority to do it. What ſay you now, O ye incredulous, ye hard, ye obſtinate hearts? Did your *Jupiter* himſelf ever give any mortal man ſuch power? Did he ever ſo much as beſtow upon his High-Prieſt, upon the moſt ſacred of all his High-Prieſts, I will not ſay the power to raiſe a dead man, or make a blind man ſee; but ſo much as to make a wheal or a pimple ſink down and lye even with the skin, by ſpeaking a word; or cure a little cleft, which a looſe skin ſometimes makes in the fingers end, only by touching it, or bidding it be angry no longer? And was it an humane power then

from which such great things as I have told you of, proceeded? Sure it was sacred, sure it was Divine: or if you will admit any more superlative expression, it was more than Divine, more than Sacred. For when thou dost that which thou art able to do, and which is proportionable to thy power and strength, there is no such reason that admiration should cry out: thou didst that which thou hadst strength to do, and which one might expect from such a power. But now to be able to transfer thy right and power to another, and to make a frail weak creature do that, which is proportionable to thy might alone; this is the effect of a power which is above all, and which contains in it the causes of all things, and the natures of all faculties. Go then and fetch us *Zoroastres*, that great Magician you brag of, through the torrid zone; or go and bring hither the Armenian that *Ctesias* writ of; nay summon *Apollonius*, *Damigero*, *Dardanus*, and all the rest of your most eminent wonder-workers that ever were; let them be gathered together and joyn their forces, and let us see them give but one of the common people power to command by a plain word, a dumb man to speak, or a man whose arms and leggs are withered to work and walk. Or if this be

be too difficult a thing, to make another do this, and do it with a ſimple command, let us ſee any of them do it themſelves. And let them call in the aſſiſtance of all their Dæmons, let them gather all the magical herbs which they can find in the boſome of the Earth, and come with the whole power of their murmuring words, and with all their charms (we will except none of them, we forbid them nothing that they can get to aid them) and let them try, if with the help of all their gods to boot, they can do any ſuch thing as theſe poor ruſtick Chriſtians effected, *nudis juſſionibus*, by their naked and bare command. Ceaſe, O ye ignorant ſouls, therefore to ſcoff and to curſe when ye hear of theſe things: which cannot hurt him at all, but will bring no ſmall prejudice to your ſelves. For the Soul is a precious thing; nothing ought to be ſo dear to a Man as that: which is in hazard by blaſpheming Chriſt. Who is no ſuch contemptible perſon that you may laugh at him, but, as appears by theſe things, *Deus ille ſublimis*, &c. *That High God, God of God, God from unknown Kingdomes, God ſent by the moſt High to be the Saviour; whom neither the Sun himſelf, nor the brighteſt Stars, (if they have any ſenſe) nor the Principalities and Rulers*

of the World, no, nor your great Gods, or thoſe who feigning themſelves to be Gods terrifie all mankind with their formidable power, could ſo much as know or ſuſpect whence, or what he was, he is ſo great. But now that it is known, and he hath demonſtrated it to the World by his Divine works; you had beſt ſubmit to him, and not imagine he is but one of us.

And that truly is good counſel for us all; to acknowledge Jeſus to be the Lord, and, ſubmitting our ſelves to his authority, to be governed by his Laws: which God from Heaven confirmed by the moſt miraculous operations of the Spirit, and of the Holy Ghoſt. It is true we do not ſee and hear thoſe things, of which the Apoſtles and they that lived in their days were ſpectators and auditors: but we have the faithful records of thoſe miraculous works and of their Sermons left by themſelves. Regiſters were delivered under the unqueſtionable hands of thoſe divine men, of what they had ſeen and heard, and of what they themſelves ſaid and did. That is, the Teſtimony of the Apoſtles, and the Teſtimony of God was preſerved and kept in the Holy Books; which ſpake the ſame to the next Age, which their Fathers had

ſeen

ſeen with their eyes and heard with their ears in the Age foregoing. And moreover, for a further confirmation, that theſe were the lively Oracles of God (his word tranſmitted unto them, on which they might rely) they had a continuance of the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt for ſome Ages following. As *Juſtin Martyr* and *Tertullian* witneſs for the ſecond Age after our Saviour: And *Origen*, *Minutius*, *Arnobius* and *Lactantius* (to name no more in ſucceeding times) witneſs for the third and part of the fourth. How could they doubt of the truth of the reports which they had received, when they beheld them ſtill verified, as much as was neceſſary, in their own days; by the teſtimony of God himſelf? And as for the incredulous Gentiles who ſtopt their ears to theſe reports, they preſſed them very ſtrongly in this manner (to uſe the words that follow in *Arnobius*) as we may do thoſe who queſtion or disbelieve the Evangelical Hiſtory in our own Age. "Will you not believe good witneſſes of "things that were done, unleſs you ſee "them done your ſelves? Shall Authors "of certain credit be rejected; who re- "ceived ſuch things themſelves and deli- "vered them to their poſterity to be be- "lieved, with no ſmall approbation? You

"will ſay, who are thoſe? I anſwer,
"whole Countries, People, Nations, all
"that incredulous race of mankind, are
"our Witneſſes and the Authors we pro-
"duce. Who would never have enter-
"tained theſe things, unleſs they had been
"clearer, as we ſay, than the light. Do
"you think that the men of that time
"were ſuch vain lying fools, ſuch ſots,
"ſuch brutes, that they feigned and ima-
"gined they ſaw ſuch things as they never
"ſaw? and that they childiſhly affirmed
"ſuch things were done, when there was
"nothing like it? and when they might
"have lived with you in good eſteem, and
"contracted alliances and kindred among
"you, would chuſe to become the pub-
"lick hatred, and to make their very
"name execrable, without any reaſon for
"it? If this ſtory be falſe, whence comes
"all the world to be filled ſo ſoon with
"this Religion? Or how was it brought
"about that ſo many people, in ſuch di-
"ſtant Countries, and of ſuch different
"humours, ſhould all conſpire and agree
"together to believe it? Were they
"drawn away with mere words? And
"with the danger of their lives followed a
"poor deſpicable Preacher, when they
"ſaw nothing that was wonderful or
ſtrange,

"ſtrange, to perſwade them to this wor-
"ſhip? What vain, ſenſeleſs imaginations
"are theſe? Therefore they believed, and
"ſuffered themſelves to be torn in pieces
"rather than deny it; becauſe they ſaw all
"theſe things done by him, and by his
"Preachers: who were ſent through the
"whole world to carry the benefits of our
"Father to mankind, and to beſtow the
"gifts of healing both on their Souls and
"Bodies.

"But our Writers have not ſet theſe
"things down faithfully. They have ex-
"tolled ſmall matters, and ambitiouſly
"magnified them beyond their juſt propor-
"tions. Why ſo, I beſeech you? By
"what reaſon ſhall we believe any of your
"writings, if this Hiſtory of ours muſt be
"rejected? In which but a few things,
"of the many that were done, are record-
"ed by men of truth and honeſty. Did
"any God come down from Heaven, and
"write with his own hand, the ſtories
"that you believe? Or is there any thing
"of that nature writ againſt ours? Then
"you believe men, and ſo do we. Your
"Books were writ by men, and ſo were
"ours. And whatſoever you will ſay of

" ours, look for the ſame to be retorted " upon your own. Will you have all " things contained in your writings to be " true? ſo are all contained in ours. Do " you ſay ours are falſe? the ſame we ſay " of yours. And how will you help your " ſelves? You cannot ſay that you ſaw the " things that you believe, no more than " we: But others ſaw them, and there- " fore you believe them, and ſo do we. " But ours were writ by rude and unlearn- " ed men, and therefore not to be belie- " ved? Conſider if this be not an advan- " tage to our cauſe, and a ſtronger reaſon " to conclude that theſe writings are ſtain- " ed with no lies, but delivered with a " ſimple mind, ignorant how to amplifie " things, and ſo ſet them off with deceit- " ful dreſſes. As for that which follows concerning the trivial ſordid ſtile, where- in they ſaid the Apoſtles writ, it does not in the leaſt render the faithfulneſs of their relations ſuſpected: and therefore I paſs it over and omit his reply to it; though I cannot well neglect this pertinent obſerva- tion of *Eraſmus* in his Preface to his Para- phraſe upon S. *Lukes* Goſpel. " The lan- " guage, ſays he, of the Goſpel is ſo ſimple " and rude, that if any body compare it " with the Hiſtory of *Thucydides* or *Livy*,

" he

" he will want abundance of things, and " be offended at as many. How many " things do the Evangeliſts paſs by? How " many do they but juſt touch in two or " three words? In how many places do " they diſagree in the order of their Narra- " tion; and in how many others do they " ſeem to thwart one another? Theſe " things might make a Reader leſs like " them, and not give ſuch credit to what " he reads. For on the contrary, they " that wrote humane Hiſtories, how ſoli- " citous were they about their entrance " upon their work? How ſcrupulouſly " did they weigh their words? What " care did they imploy to obſerve a decent " order, to ſet down nothing but what " was plauſible and exactly deſcribed? " And with what art do they endeavour to " ſet things lively before our eyes? With " what pleaſures do they intice and detain " the minds of the Readers, that they may " not at all grow weary of them? And " yet theſe elaborate Monuments, for the " greateſt part, are loſt; and thoſe that re- " main are not read with any aſſurance " that they report nothing but the truth. " For who is ſo credulous, as to believe " that *Titus Livius* tells never a tale in his " Hiſtory? But there are millions of men

" found,

"found, who had rather die ten times,
"than think there is one sentence false in
"the Evangelical story? Is it not plain
"by this, that it is not a business of hu-
"mane power and prudence, but conduct-
"ed by a Divine vertue? What Philoso-
"pher is there that ever had the confidence
"to propound such Paradoxes as these,
"with hope to be believed? That one *Je-*
"*sus* was crucified, and by his death sa-
"ved mankind; that he was God and
"Man, born of a Virgin; that he rose
"again from the dead, and sits at the right
"hand of God the Father; that he taught,
"they were blessed men who mourned,
"hungred and thirsted, were afflicted,
"ill-spoken of, and killed for the professi-
"on of his name; and that one day they
"should live again, and see him sit in
"judgment to give immortality to the pi-
"ous, and endless pains to the ungodly.
"What is there plausible and taking in all
"this? And yet the humble low stile of
"the Gospel perswaded men of this, so
"that thousands, millions, will rather
"forsake their lives than this plain truth;
"which a few private, unknown, poor,
"mean disciples of his delivered to the
"World.

What

What ſhould move us then to diſtruſt theſe records of the faithful WITNESSES of Chriſt, which are come down to us, through the hands of all Ages ſince, ſo as they were delivered to them? What do we ſee now, more than our Forefathers did in *Arnobius* his days, or thoſe which ſucceeded, that gives us any cauſe to ſuſpect their truth? Are they altered from what they were? If any company of men had been ſo bold as to venture at ſuch a change, they would firſt have mended the ſtile no doubt, and placed things in greater order and method, according to the exacteſt rules of art. But that they are untainted and uncorrupted, and, in no material paſſage, vary from what they were in former Ages, appears by what all Chriſtian Writers have tranſcribed out of them into their Books, which agrees with that which we now read. They are the ſame now that ever they were. They contain a relation of thoſe things, which converted, as *Arnobius* ſays, the incredulous world: who did not want wit nor learning no more than we; but ſaw great reaſon to renounce all the fables which had been told of their Gods, and to believe what they read here concerning *Jeſus.*

ſus. For it is the teſtimony of God Almighty, they evidently perceived, that is recorded in thoſe Books. Which when we receive, our faith will not be leſs divine than theirs in the firſt Age: becauſe we both receive the *Witneſs of God*, only they ſaw or heard it, and we read the record of what they ſaw and heard. Which makes no conſiderable difference in the nature of the teſtimony. For the teſtimony of any man ſtanding upon a ſworn record, is as good an evidence, as if he were alive in perſon to give it. No man loſes his cauſe when his Witneſſes die, if they have already given their evidence in any Court of Record. And therefore there is no reaſon that our Lord *Jeſus* ſhould loſe his authority among us, becauſe the Apoſtles his WITNESSES have left the world, and ſo has the WITNESS of the *Spirit* and the *Holy Ghoſt:* ſince that which they teſtified to mankind ſtands upon authentick record, in the holy Goſpel, which cannot with any ſhow of reaſon be queſtioned: For if we do not allow this way of conveying down a teſtimony to future times, we can know nothing of what was done before us. And by denying all credit to theſe writings, we ſhall only teach poſterity how little credit is due

due to any of ours. Nay, we ſhall ſhake all mens titles to their eſtates: and Kings will not be able to keep their Crowns faſt upon their heads. Nothing will be certain, but it may be queſtioned whether all the Records in the Tower, and the publick Acts of former Kings and Parliaments be not mere Forgeries.

Beſides, no body in thoſe days ever went about to diſprove what theſe *Witneſſes of Chriſt* preached and have writ. Neither *Jew* nor *Gentile* undertook to ſhow that theſe things were only deviſed for his credit. There were too great Teſtimonies from Heaven ſtill remaining in the Church for ſeveral Ages, to confute ſuch a ſlander. And therefore all that the Devil himſelf could think of to ſhake mens belief, was to ſet up ſome wonder-workers of his own, to confront *Jeſus*: and as it were to vie miracles with him and his Diſciples. But all were ſo ſoon ſcattered, like miſts before the Sun, that they appeared to be but thin ſhadows in compariſon with the living SPIRIT of God, that was in the Church, which baffled and overcame them all. Inſomuch that *Origen* aſſures the Heathen, and they never went about to confute him, that there were

were not above *thirty* of *Simon Magus* his followers then to be found in the world; though he had made diligent enquiry after them, by travel into all parts. They were all vanished, though he made a great noise for a time, whilest the followers of *Jesus* multiplied and increased, even by their persecutions. Nor could *Apollonius* afterward gain any Proselytes, that continued; but his fame soon died together with himself. Whereas the authority of *Jesus* bare up it self against all the opposition of the *Roman* Empire, and not only was supported, but advanced, and prevailed more and more: their barbarous cruelties only making it grow the faster. For herein, as *Lactantius* observes, the faith and constancy of Christians was bravely displayed. Men thought they did not without cause abhor the Heathenish superstition, when they saw them rather die than do that, which others doing, lived and enjoyed the greatest worldly prosperity. It made them enquire what that good was, which they defended even unto death: which was dearer than all the pleasures and glory of this world. The people heard them in the midst of torments, glory in Christ *Jesus*. And whilest they enquired who he was, the truth

truth of the Goſpel was divulged and ſpread abroad among them. Their ſufferings brought many to ſee their Martyrdom; and there they ſaw that which moved their enquiry; and by their enquiry they were ſatisfied, and learnt to believe in *Jeſus* as thoſe *Martyrs* did.

But it is time to put an end to this Chapter, which I ſhall conclude with a few remarks upon ſome places of the holy Books, relating to the teſtimony of the Apoſtles, or thoſe that followed them. The firſt is in the 2 *Cor.* vi. 4, 5, 6, &c. where you read how the Apoſtles *approved themſelves as the miniſters of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes, in impriſonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in faſtings, by pureneſs, by knowledge, by long-ſuffering, by kindneſs, by the Holy Ghoſt, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth,* &c. In which words, if they be well conſidered, you will find every one of theſe three WITNESSES, which S. *John* ſays, gave teſtimony to our Saviour on Earth: ſo that he might be ſaid to *come* in the miniſtry of the Apoſtles, *by Water, and Bloud, and the Spirit.* They expreſſed the Holineſs of his life, *by their pureneſs, by their long-*

long-ſuffering, by their kindneſs, by love unfeigned, by the armour of righteouſneſs on the right hand and on the left; that is, they were every way appointed and armed with integrity againſt all calumnies; there was none that could touch their reputation, and ſay that theſe men had any worldly deſign. And as they witneſſed to him thus in their holy lives, ſo they did in their holy doctrine, *by knowledge, and by the word of truth*, preaching the Goſpel ſincerely, as thoſe that ſtudied not to pleaſe men, but God who trieth the hearts. And they were made conformable alſo to his death, and thereby continued the witneſs of the BLOUD, *in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in impriſonments*, and all the reſt of the hardſhips here mentioned, which I need not tranſcribe again. And laſtly, He forgets not to remember them of the Witneſs of the SPIRIT which they brought along with them: For he ſays they approved themſelves as miniſters of God, *by the Holy Ghoſt, and by the power of God*. That is, beſide all the other Divine gifts wherewith they appeared, they confirmed their doctrine by many miraculous works, which could not be done but by the power of God. Thus they became

came not only *his witneſſes*, as our Saviour ſaid they ſhould, xxiv. *Luke* 48. but they witneſſed to him after the very ſame manner, that he had taught in his example; by *Water*, by *Bloud*, and by the *Spirit*. And therefore when he exhorts *Timothy* to preach the Goſpel, and to be ſtrong in the grace of *Jeſus* Chriſt, and to commit the charge of preaching alſo to other faithful perſons, He enforces his perſwaſion by this argument; that the things he was to deliver were only ſuch as *he had heard of him among or by* MANY WITNESSES, 2 *Tim.* ii. 2. He learnt them by ſo many good evidences which S. *Paul* had given him, that he need not fear to ſpeak them to any man, much leſs doubt to commend them to other faithful preachers (upon the ſame account that he had received them) that they might be able to inſtruct poſterity.

Such, one would think from what hath been ſaid, were thoſe *TWO WITNESSES* mentioned in xi. *Rev.* 3. men of an Apoſtolical ſpirit, whom *Jeſus* raiſed up, after his prime *Witneſſes* had left the world, to juſtifie ſtill by all manner of arguments that great Truth, which they had preached and ſealed with their Bloud, and God

had ſealed by the teſtimony of the Spirit. The next words indeed ſeem to import that the whole body of Chriſtians, whom they inſtructed, joyned with them in this teſtimony: But ſtill theſe great miniſters of *Jeſus* Chriſt, the guides and leaders of thoſe Chriſtians (whoſoever they were, and in what times ſoever they lived, I meddle not with ſuch difficulties) were his moſt eminent *Witneſſes*. Who preached the Goſpel with ſuch power, that it excited againſt them the fury of unbelievers, who could not endure that ſuch *Witneſſes* ſhould ſpeak for *Jeſus*. For they teſtified to him theſe *three* ways here mentioned (which is all that I alledge this place for, not taking upon me to interpoſe in the controverſies there are about the explanation of this Viſion) by Water, Bloud and the Spirit. Firſt by *Water*, if we underſtand thereby, their holy preaching and living. For it is ſaid, *ver.* 3. that they had power *to propheſie*: which ſignifies that they were endowed with extraordinary gifts (for *Prophets* were next to *Apoſtles* in the Church) to interpret and expound the holy writings; and prove out of *Moſes* and the Prophets (as our Saviour did, xxiv. *Luke* 27.) all things that concerned him, both his ſufferings and his glory. And this

this they did *cloathed in ſackcloth*; that is, in the habit of *mourners*: for the abominations, I ſuppoſe, which they ſaw committed, and the provoking infidelity of thoſe to whom they preached. Which was a notable mark of their great piety and charity, as you may learn from ix. *Ezek.* 4. and v. *Matth.* 4. They are ſaid alſo to be *the two Olive-trees*, *ver.* 4. that is, like *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, (two famous perſons among the *Jews* after the captivity, who were repreſented by this Emblem, iv. *Zach.* 3.) *King and Prieſts unto God*; men endowed with great authority and illumination from above, and with as great purity. For they had ſo much of the oil of gladneſs, that they imparted it to others: *to the Candleſticks*; that is, the Churches wherein they ſhined. For ſo S. *John* teaches us, in the beginning of this Book, to interpret *Candleſticks*: which is a great argument of the excellency of theſe men, who by the witneſs of their life and doctrine, made all thoſe who were under their care, to teſtifie, ſome way or other, to the ſame truth that they did. At leaſt by their lives; for they are ſaid *to ſtand before the God of the Earth*. Which is an *Hebrew* phraſe, ſignifying to miniſter unto God, to be im-

ployed in his worſhip and ſervice, as the Prieſts and People were at the Temple: and therefore ſets forth the piety and devotion of theſe perſons, whoſe buſineſs it was to ſerve God, even then when it was moſt dangerous ſo to do.

And as by Water, ſo by *Bloud* alſo they bare witneſs of him. For they had *war made againſt them*, and in the fight, ſince they would not yield, they were *killed*, *ver.* 7. Nay, it was notorious to all, that their perſecutors had not only drawn the ſword againſt them, but that they had reſiſted *unto bloud*: for *their dead bodies lay in the ſtreet of the great City*, *ver.* 8. and they would *not ſuffer them to be put in graves*, *ver.* 9. which ſhows the enraged malice which they bare to theſe zealous WITNESSES: who had *tormented them* (*ver.* 10.) by the ſharpneſs of their arguments, and by their conſtant reproofs of their infidelity and wickedneſs.

Nor was the *Witneſs of the* SPIRIT wanting: for they approved themſelves as Miniſters of God, to ſpeak in S. *Paul*'s language, and Witneſſes of Chriſt by wonders and miracles ſo great, that they might be compared to the two great Prophets

phets *Moſes* and *Elias*, who appeared with our Saviour on the holy Mount. For they ſent *fire out of their mouths* (*ver.* 5.) and had *power to ſhut up Heaven that it ſhould not rain*, (*ver.* 6.) both which were the known works of *Elias*. They had *power likewiſe over the Waters, to turn them to bloud, and to ſmite the Earth with all plagues, as often as they pleaſed*, *ver.* 6. which is the plain deſcription of men like to *Moſes*: who brought ſuch plagues on the *Egyptians* as theſe had power to do upon thoſe who were like them; both in hardneſs of heart and in oppreſſion of the faithful ſervants of God. And therefore I ſuppoſe they are deſcribed with a power to hurt and deſtroy, rather than with that healing and ſaving vertue wherewith the *firſt Witneſſes* of Chriſt principally came, to ſignifie that their rebellious enemies ſhould be puniſhed for their rejecting *Jeſus*, and doing *deſpight to the SPIRIT of grace*: which once came to them in a more healthful and ſalutary manner, caſting out Devils, turning Water into Wine, healing all manner of Plagues and Diſeaſes, and that as often as they themſelves pleaſed to deſire. And more than this you read (*ver.* 11.) that after the time appointed by God for it, he reſtored theſe

Prophets to life again: and thereby made their teſtimony ſomething like that of his Son's. That is, men animated with the very ſame ſpirit ſtood up in their place, to the amazement of all their oppoſers. Who were ſo far from being able to hurt them, that they were as ſafe as if they had been *in Heaven.* The preſence of God was with them, as in *the cloud* which preſerved the *Iſraelites* from all danger: And he advanced them to great honour, by the Heavenly gifts wherewith they were adorned. As *Elias* is ſaid to come though he did not appear in perſon, but another in his ſpirit and power; and *David* is ſaid to be raiſed up to reign over the *Jews* (xxx. *Jer.* 9.) becauſe his Son, that is, Chriſt was ſet upon his Throne: ſo did *the Spirit of life from God enter into theſe witneſſes, and they ſtood upon their feet,* when he raiſed up other Apoſtolical perſons in their ſtead, who were not leſs eminent than thoſe who were dead, but full of the ſame ſpirit of wiſdom, holineſs, burning zeal, and might and power alſo from God. This frighted all their enemies, as well it might, when they ſaw the Chriſtian Cauſe would not die, do what they could. But if they killed ſome, others ſtarted up in their room to witneſs unto

unto *Jeſus*, and aſſert the ſame truth; by wonders, by their admirable preaching, by their holy life, and by death it ſelf; if nothing elſe would ſatisfie them.

For thus all the MARTYRS teſtified to him. Whoſe *BLOUD* witneſſed not only that they believed his Religion, and that they valued the favour of *Jeſus* more than their lives; but that they had very good reaſon ſo to do: or elſe men of ſuch wiſdom would not have endured ſuch torments as they freely expoſed themſelves unto, with ſo much chearfulneſs, as we find they did. For as S. *Hilary* tells us, *Some gloried in the chains which they wore in priſon; others being beaten till they died, did nothing but give thanks; others readily laid down their necks to be cut off: and more ran to thoſe piles, which they ſaw built to burn them; and, with a devout haſte, leapt into thoſe fires, at which the miniſters of their torments trembled; and there were thoſe who were thrown into the Sea, not as if they were to be drown'd, but went to partake of the refreſhment of eternal bliſs.* So he writes upon thoſe words of the *Pſalmiſt*, lxv. 10, 12. *Thou haſt tried us, as ſilver is tried: we went through fire and water*, &c. The fruit of which was, that thereby ma-

ny were converted unto Chriſt. Their death gave life to others, who ſeeing their zeal, their conſtancy, their meekneſs, their patience, and their charity, became Proſelytes to that faith for which they ſuffered. A new race of illuſtrious *Martyrs* roſe up in their ſtead, in whom they yet lived. For *there was no other cauſe* (as that Father adds upon the following Verſe) why they gave themſelves as whole burnt offerings to Chriſt, *but that by the example of their Faith and Martyrdom, they might inſtruct many more to be Martyrs.* Nay, their BLOUD did not only water many young plants, and made them grow to their perfection; but He tells us a little after, in his expoſition of the ſame *Pſalm*, *Plures ſcimus*, &c. *We know many who were wholly ignorant of the Divine Sacraments* (*i.e.* the Chriſtian Religion) *that by the example of the Martyrs run to Martyrdom.* No wonder then, that theſe above all others have been called the WITNESSES of *Jeſus* (for that's the interpretation of the word MARTYR) and that Chriſtians were forward even to kiſs their wounds, and to embrace their dead bodies, as the remains of thoſe who had done moſt eminent ſervice to our Lord. Who himſelf therefore witneſſed to *them* after

after they were dead, and declared that their *bloud* was very dear and precious in his ſight, and that it had ſealed nothing but the truth. For there can no other reaſon be given but this, why at the Monuments of theſe MARTYRS or WITNESSES our Saviour was pleaſed to have ſo many miracles wrought afterward, and before ſuch a number of people, that *Porphyry* himſelf (as we learn both from S. *Cyril* and S. *Hierom*) though an avowed enemy of our Religion, could not but acknowledge them. They ſtill ſpake and bare *Witneſs* to *Jeſus* by theſe wonderful works, when they were dead; or rather *Jeſus* ſpake for them, as I ſaid, and declared from Heaven that theſe were his *faithful Witneſſes*, whoſe word ought to be believed, whereby they had declared him to be the Lord.

A PRAYER.

WHO would not believe on thee, O Lord? who would not magnifie thy Name? For great and marvellous are thy works,

works, just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints. All Nations ought to come and worship before thee, whose Majesty and Glory is so many ways made manifest. Thou hast raised poor and ignorant men to be mighty Ministers of thy Grace, and Witnesses of thy Resurrection, and co-workers with thee for the illumination and conversion of the world. Blessed be thy name, for all the glorious Lights which have been in thy Church in every Age; by whom thy holy Faith hath been preserved and propagated to our days. Blessed be thy name, for all the Martyrs who sealed it with their Bloud: and for all the Confessors who freely acknowledged thee, with the danger of their lives. Great was thy glory which shone in their most exemplary holiness, fortitude, patience, love unfeigned both to friends and enemies; and in that mighty power whereby they approved themselves as the Ministers of God.

Thanks be to thee, O God, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, for the comfort of thy holy Scriptures, wherein we read the story of our Saviours wondrous love; and of that most miraculous power which appeared in him, to testifie unto him, and at last raised him from the dead, and advanced him to the throne of Glory. From whence he sent the Holy Ghost,

to

to endue his Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts, paſtors and Teachers, with power from on high; that they might be his Witneſſes, and commit that which they had received to faithful men, who ſhould be able to teach others alſo. *O God, I cannot but again adore thy incomprehenſible love, which can never be ſufficiently praiſed. Who can underſtand the exceeding riches of thy grace, that thou whoſe naked glory is too bright for our weak minds to fix their eyes upon, wouldeſt be pleaſed in moſt admirable condeſcending love, to manifeſt thy ſelf and viſit us in our fleſh? Thou art infinitely above the greateſt of us; who are far leſs worthy to approach thee than the loweſt creature in this world is fit for our friendſhip and ſociety. So much the more marvellous is thy unheard of love, that thou wouldeſt admit us to ſuch a near relation unto thee. So much the greater is our happineſs, that in Chriſt* Jeſus *thou haſt made thy ſelf our portion, and deſigned us to be eternally bleſſed with thee. Great was his care and kindneſs all the days of his fleſh, towards the moſt miſerable wretches: who received the greateſt tokens of his love. I rejoyce now to think with what tenderneſs he received the poor, fed the hungry, viſited the ſick, cured the diſeaſed; and when he had left the world, communicated the ſame power*

unto

unto others, that they might exerciſe the ſame charity that he had done. I ſee both the power and goodneſs of our Lord, in all thoſe works of wonder which he did. I ſee that his mercy endureth for ever, which hath preſerved a faithful record of theſe things, that we through patience and comfort of the holy Scriptures might have hope.

Now the God of all grace inſpire me and all other Chriſtian Souls, with the ſame faith, love and ardent zeal, which was in thoſe burning and ſhining Lights, the Witneſſes of Chriſt. That we may be followers of them, as they were of him: and acknowledging the ſame Lord, being members of the ſame body, partaking of the ſame Sacraments, and living upon the ſame Heavenly food; we may lead the ſame holy lives, in hope to ſhine one day with them in the ſame celeſtial glory. Help us to continue in the things which we have learnt, and have been aſſured of, knowing of whom we have learnt them; that we may not at any time let them ſlip. For how ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; thou, O God, alſo bearing them witneſs both with ſigns and wonders, and with divers miracles,

miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, according to thine own will? *May we always carefully lay up and preſerve theſe ſacred truths in our heart, which were in ſo glorious a manner delivered to us! May they work there perpetually with great power, and be reverenced as the holy Oracles of God! May they be the ſpring of all our motions, throughout the whole courſe of our life! That with an even ſteddy pace, whatſoever dangers come in our way, we may walk on towards that happy place, where thoſe holy ones rejoyce for ever with our Lord. To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be given by us, and by thoſe glorified Spirits, and by all the Angels in Heaven, everlaſting Praiſes.* Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The Uſe we are to make of their Teſtimony.

IT is time now to bring this Diſcourſe to an iſſue: and, having examined all theſe Divine *Witneſſes*, taken their proofs and depoſitions, and found their teſtimony, upon due enquiry, to be good and legal, to conſider with our ſelves what we have to do, and what judgment we will paſs now that we have heard their evidence. God the *Father* of all, ſays that *Jeſus* is his Son; the *Word* himſelf appeared oft to juſtifie this Truth; the *Holy Ghoſt* came down from Heaven to atteſt it; the *Prophet of the Higheſt* proclaimed it; the *holy life* of our Saviour ſpake as much; and his *Bloudy Death* ſealed it; to which the *Spirit* ſet its ſeal alſo, and undeniably witneſſed that bloud was ſacred which he ſhed, for a teſtimony, upon the Croſs.

Croſs. All theſe have done their part, all that *Witneſſes* by their office are to do, for the making of this good, that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. That which remains is our task: who are bound to conſider, and ſeriouſly ponder, and impartially judge, and then faithfully improve their ſacred Teſtimony, that *Jeſus* may have the *glory* that is due unto him, and we may have that *benefit*, which God by him deſigns to beſtow upon us.

I.

And firſt of all let us conſider a-while the great weight and importance of this Truth, that *Jeſus is Gods Son.* If the whole frame of Chriſtian Religion did not rely upon it; there would not have been ſuch care taken to ſettle it, and lay it deep in our hearts, by ſo much labour and ſtrength of argument. It is equally blameable to be laborious about a trifle, and to be ſuperficial and ſlight in things of greateſt moment. No man of ſenſe will, with a great deal of diligence, ſummon together a number of Witneſſes, to make good that which, when it is proved, it is indifferent (as to any thing that depends upon it) whether it be true or falſe. No queſtion

queſtion there is a conſiderable intereſt of ours, which is concerned in this truth; elſe the Holy men of God would not have called HEAVEN AND EARTH TO WITNESS and bear their teſtimony to it. The *Father*, the *Word*, the *Holy-Ghoſt* would not have concurred with the *Water*, the *Blood* and the *Spirit* to aſſert and maintain it; but that all is little enough to juſtifie it, and that it is a thing of which we cannot but deſire the greateſt aſſurance: It is (1.) the *Foundation* of all other Truths in the Chriſtian Religion, as you may read, 1 *Cor.* iii. 11. xvi. *Matth.* 17, 18. It is the *Rock* on which the Church is built; the Ground that ſupports the whole Fabrick: which if it be infirm and rotten, all falls to rubbiſh and confuſion. And therefore (2.) the Devil laboured to undermine this Truth above all others. Like a ſubtile Enemy, when the Apoſtles as *wiſe Maſter-builders* had laid this foundation, he imployed falſe Teachers and counterfeit Apoſtles, as ſo many Pioneers, to work under this, and lay their trains to blow it up: which he knew was a nearer way to ruine all, than to plant his Batteries againſt the building onely. The Hiſtory of the firſt times afford too plentiful inſtances of this. For we find there aroſe *many Anti-chriſts*,

1 *Joh.* ii. 18. and *many false Prophets* went out into the World: iv. 1. And the very *Spirit of Antichrist*, as he tells us, *vers.* 3. was this, to deny that *Jesus, who came in flesh* (in a mortal condition and subject to our miseries) *was Christ*. They would not have it thought that any one who suffered so vilely, was the great KING that had been so long expected. Or if they believed *Jesus* to be a great Prophet, and that he was raised from the dead, and rewarded for his labours in Heaven, as other Prophets were; yet they denied that he was made LORD OF ALL, the Head of the Church and of all Principalities and Powers; who was to be honoured by all Men, even as they honour the Father. And therefore (3.) the Apostles imployed as great care and earnest indeavour for to strengthen and support this weighty truth, as the Enemies of Religion laboured might and main, as we say, to weaken and overthrow the belief of it. This was the thing they every where preached, as you read in the History of the Acts of the Apostles. And for this very end S. *John* wrote this Epistle, to confirm his Disciples in this Faith, against all the subtile opposition of their adversaries; as you may collect from many passages beside that which I have expounded.

pounded. And it was the thing aimed at alſo in his ſecond Epiſtle, where he rejoyces to hear that they *walkt in the truth*, verſ. 3. and cautions them againſt *thoſe deceivers and Antichriſts*, verſ. 7. And indeed (4.) it was the great note of difference between the true Prophets and the falſe, as you may ſee, 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. and in the place now mentioned in this Epiſtle, iv. 1, 2. which alſo (5.) makes him command his Diſciples, that if any one pretending to the Spirit did not acknowledge this; they ſhould not uſe the common civility to him, of bidding him *God ſpeed*, ii. Epiſt. 10. And if any man apoſtatiz'd from this faith (which is the laſt thing I ſhall mention) S. *Paul* pronounces a moſt dreadful curſe upon him, and wiſhes or predicts the Lord would come and ſpeedily execute it, 1 *Corinth.* xvi. 22. *For whoſoever tranſgreſſeth and abideth not in the Doctrine of* CHRIST, *hath not God:* 2. epiſt. of S. *Joh.* 9.

This being a truth therefore of ſo great moment, as appears by theſe conſiderations, and by the many *Witneſſes* to which S. *John* here appeals for the proof of it; let us be ſure to ſettle a ſenſe of its concernment to us, in our hearts; and then to think often of it, and ſtudy it ſo thoroughly,

that we may perceive both the truth and importance of it: or elſe we ſhall prove our ſelves deſpiſers of God, who do as bad as ſay, that it was a needleſs pains which he beſtowed, in giving ſo many evidences of that, for which we have no regard, or no liſt to bring to trial and examination. And that truly, I doubt, is the temper of moſt Chriſtian People at this day. They think all diſcourſes on this ſubject uſeleſs or little worth; becauſe they prove that which they believe already. Heathens might reap ſome profit by them, but what, ſay they, have we to do with them? But while ſuch thoughts as theſe have too long poſſeſſed the drowſie Chriſtian world, they remain, alas! in the very dregs of Heatheniſm, with a little ſmack or taſte of Chriſtianity. It is a ſad thing to conſider, but ſo it is, that they who cannot endure to think upon what ground their belief ſtands (becauſe they would not put themſelves to the trouble of underſtanding it) are of that baſe temper which is the mother of Idolatry, of Mahometiſm, and of all ſpurious Religions in the World. For what is it makes Men worſhip the Sun, Moon and Stars, or addreſs their ſervices to dead men, nay to a piece of wood, or a red cloth, or ſome ſuch paultry thing? what makes

makes *Mahomet* ſo reverenced, by a great part of the World, as the Prophet of the Higheſt; but that they have ever been ſo taught, and it is the cuſtome to honour him? They examine no further, nor enquire for any other reaſon; that is, do not obſerve that there is no other reaſon for their belief. Upon the very ſame account do many receive Jeſus for the Son of God; He hath no better footing in their Souls, nor ſtands upon firmer grounds, than *Mahomet*, or the Sun, or an Idol does, in the opinion of other men. There is no other reaſon, as far as they know, but only the common practice of the place where they live, why they honour him as the great Lord who governs all. Is not this a foul diſhonour to our Saviour, to have no better ſubjects, nor a ſtronger hold, than this, of their hearts? How little is he beholden to thoſe, who can juſtifie his Title, upon no better principles, than others make uſe of in the behalf of the Uſurpers of Divinity? But it reflects the greateſt ſhame in our own faces, that we ſhould have ſuch plentiful and good evidence in our Books, and none at all in our minds. What is that reſpect worth which we pretend to Religion, if a falſe would have been accepted with as much affection as we have for the

true; had it not come too late?

The People would have Chriſt's Miniſters to move their affections; to carry them away with a torrent of words, and earneſt expreſſions. But to what ſhall they carry them? ſtay a while and anſwer that queſtion. If it be not to that which is true, they will do you wrong to hurry them ſo violently and in ſuch haſte, to that from which you ought rather to run away. Now how ſhall you know whether it be to the Truth or no? Muſt it not be proved by good reaſons; muſt they not make it evident and clear that they propound ſomething which ought to be entertained, before they can ſafely move any mans heart to embrace it? But to what purpoſe is all this done, if after all their labour, you will not conſider it? If all this muſt be paſſed by as dry ſtuff, and you will gape only for the application? Conſider, I beſeech you, that if the affections you deſire ſhould be ſtirred, be not grounded on good judgment (which muſt be ſetled on ſome weighty reaſon) they are ſo far from being ſo good as they ought; that they may ſoon prove very hurtful and bad. They diſpoſe a man to be an empty Enthuſiaſt; to be rapt away with any paſſionate, though idle

ſtory;

ſtory; and to be ſet on fire by zealous expreſſions for any plauſible though dangerous error. In ſhort, ſuch affections are indifferent to be either good or bad, as it chances. Therefore if you would have our Lord *commend you* for being of his Religion rather than of any other; if you would have the *praiſe* of it; ſtudy well ſuch things as theſe, which from the Holy writings I have propounded to be conſidered in the foregoing Treatiſe: for you ſee the very bottom of his Religion ſtands upon them. So ſhall you be ſatisfied alſo that your affections are truly good, when you are moved with love towards him, becauſe you *are ſure and know* (as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, vi. Joh. 69.) *that he is that* CHRIST, *the Son of the living God.* Do you not think that many have a very tender melting affection for the Bleſſed Virgin *Mary*; and that they are full of devotion to ſeveral other Saints, and feel a great paſſion ſometimes in their Prayers to them, or in their commendation of them? Have a care, leſt your affections to the Lord Jeſus be no better than theſe. How can you think that they are of an higher ſtrain, more than meer natural and imaginative things; if you have no better reaſons to prove that he is to be worſhipped, than they have to

build their respect upon to those? If you receive him for the *King of Heaven*, upon the same account that she is set up for the *Queen* (because it is the common opinion, which you have suckt in with your Mothers milk, *&c.*) your love to him is just like their love to her: nothing Divine nor Heavenly, but a natural passion, which is as ready to spend it self upon any other person, as on himself.

And here it will be fit to add, that we ought to be very cautious what we believe; because there are so many cheats in the world. And of those above all others we ought to be well aware, who would have us use no caution; but greedily swallow, without any chewing, that which they deliver to us upon their word. God you see would not have us believe without good reasons; and reasons proportionable to the weight of the thing, which we are to believe. His Ministers appeal to the testimony of known *Witnesses*: and where Witnesses offer themselves to us to prove any thing, it is our duty sure to hear and examine them. And we ought not to surrender our belief to any thing carelesly; nor, either out of idleness and sloth, or being over-awed by the confidence which any

any men aſſume to themſelves, content our ſelves with an implicite faith: neglecting to ſearch, and prove, and try all things, which demand to have no leſs than our Souls reſigned up unto them. For that which commands our underſtanding, and hath got authority there, hath a right to govern our Will and command the whole man. And therefore we had need take care what we ſuffer to ſeat it ſelf in that throne; for according as our opinions and judgments are, ſo will our inclinations be, both in our affections and in our lives. It is a great commendation which *Socrates* gives *Cebes*, that he was careful to enquire into all things, and duly weigh them, οὐ ῥᾴδιον εἰθίλει πείθεσθαι, ὅτι ἄν τις εἴποι, and would not preſently believe that which any body ſaid, though otherwiſe he had ſufficient reſpect unto him. That warineſs which was in an Heathen ſure doth as much or more concern us Chriſtians. Who ought to ſuſpect thoſe who would have us believe them, without putting our ſelves to the trouble of much ſearch. It is a ſign they mean to deceive; for if God himſelf doth not expect to be believed, unleſs there be good witneſſes for that to which his Embaſſadors demand aſſent; why ſhould men be ſo preſumptu-

preſumptuous as to ask us to believe them blindly? Or why ſhould we be ſuch obedient fools, as to do more for them than God would have us do for himſelf? He hath given us eyes, and therefore we ought to look about us, eſpecially when men bid us wink and take any thing upon truſt. He hath endued us with Reaſon, and therefore we ought to ſift and try, and examine that which is propounded to us. And if any body ſay, do not try nor examine; you are not able to diſcern the differences of things; believe as we teach, for we cannot deceive you: mark that man or company of men, as the greateſt Deceivers. Who intend to impoſe ſomething upon you, which will not abide the teſt; and for which they have no good proof, if their pretences be examined. You may be ſure if they were well furniſhed with proofs, they would not fear the trial, but deſire to have all brought to the touch-ſtone, that Truth may be differenced from its counterfeit. No body refuſes to be judged, but he that knows his cauſe is naught, and fears he ſhall be caſt. Such men had need do all they can to lurk in the dark, and put off their ſtuff when no body can ſee what it is; who know it is deceitfully wrought, and will not abide the light.

light. They do wiſely and as cunning Merchants, who make up in words and great aſſurances of their honeſty, what is wanting in the goodneſs of their wares. But why we ſhould have ſo little wit as to take their words, who can tell? We muſt anſwer for this folly, no doubt, to Almighty God; who hath given us more underſtanding if we would uſe it, and taught us by himſelf to call for good witneſſes of that, which is offered to us for a truth. And the more ſtrictly we examine *theſe* which S. *John* here alledges, the better we ſhall be ſatisfied that they intend not to deceive us. Which is a mark we ſhould always have much in our eye, when we are enquiring after Truth. If the more we ſearch, conſider and ponder the proofs which are brought, the better they appear, and the clearer they grow; it is a very good ſign there is nothing wanting to make it fully entertain'd, but only longer thoughts, and greater and more ſerious conſideration. As on the other hand, we have great reaſon to ſuſpect and turn away from that, which the longer we weigh its proofs, the lighter they ſeem: and the propounders of them alſo begin to ſhift and ſhuffle, till they have put all into a miſt, in which we can

ſee

ſee nothing, but that they are at a loſs, and are fain to puzzle us, becauſe they cannot clear that which they were about. Thanks be to God there is nothing of this in the evidences we give, for the true Chriſtian Religion. They are plain and perſpicuous, and ſhow themſelves in a greater brightneſs, the more we look upon them, and the better we are acquainted with them. Search and try what has been ſaid, and the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt will ſhine with greater luſtre in your eyes, and you will confeſs with S. *Peter*, 2 i. 3. that *he hath called us to the knowledge of him, by glory and vertue*; that is, by a moſt amazing power of God, which declared him to be his only Son, our Lord.

II.

Let us therefore in the next place, conſider ſeriouſly, how excellent and perfectly rational the Faith of Chriſtians is. There is nothing founded upon ſuch Authority, as our moſt holy Religion. It is no childiſh, ſilly thing, to be a believer. A man doth not betray his weakneſs and eaſie credulity, when upon examination and ſearch he ſuffers his Soul to be planted with

with theſe new Principles; but demonſtrates the ſtrength, the nobleneſs and ingenuity of his mind, which can diſcern and judge aright: for nothing can pretend to ſo much reaſon as they. There are a vaſt heap of things, which I could here accumulate, beſide thoſe which I have treated of, to make good this aſſertion. But becauſe the method of the Apoſtle which I have followed, is ſo clear and eaſie, and the Witneſſes ſo full and pregnant, that every one of them affords us many evidences; I will content my ſelf with a brief review of what hath been ſaid. Which will be ſufficient to convince us, that *our Faith is the higheſt improvement of our Reaſon*; and doth not debaſe, but elevate and raiſe our underſtanding, upon the ſureſt grounds of Divine demonſtration. For if you conſider what Teſtimonials they brought along with them, who have pretended to ſpeak in God's name, you will find there is nothing comparable to the Witneſs which God hath given of his Son. No, not in that Religion which was really founded by his Authority; much leſs in that where there was only the *Name* of God pretended, without any *Power*.

L 2 *Maho-*

I. *Mahomet*, I mean (to begin firſt with the latter of theſe) took upon him to be the Apoſtle and the Prophet of God; greater not only than *Moſes*, but than *Jeſus* himſelf. And ſuch was his confident brags of Revelations from God, that among a company of wild *Arabians*, whom *Algazel* acknowledges to have approached the neareſt to Beaſts, of all other men, He made ſome proſelytes to his belief. But what proof did he give, that he was divinely ſent? Was it ever heard that God ſpake to him ſo much as once, as he did often to our Saviour? At what time, or in what place, and in whoſe audience did God ſay to him, *Thou art my Prophet?* When did a voice from Heaven come to any three, or but one man, and ſay, *This is the Apoſtle of God, hear him?* It is a marvellous Providence of God, that this Impoſtor, who wanted no confidence, ſhould never adventure in all the relations he hath made of himſelf (quite contrary to our Lord who wrote nothing of his own life, but left all to his Diſciples) to tell any ſuch ſtory as this, for his greater credit and glory among his followers. We read indeed of ſome idle tales which he reports, of an Angel ſpeaking to him; and

of

of his aſcenſion into Heaven, I know not how many millions of miles: But what witneſs was there of theſe things? what was his name, who ſaw the Angel appear to him? or who ſtood by, when he was tranſported and carried out of ſight, as he dreamed? Or when and to whom did *Moſes* or any one elſe appear, and verifie it, that he had been with them in glory? If we muſt take his own word, which is all we can hear of to vouch it, then we muſt not refuſe to believe every fooliſh fellow, who has impudence enough to pretend to propheſie. But what then will become of the faith of *Mahomet* himſelf, if the ſword were out of his hand? Let us hear ſuch a man as *John* the Baptiſt (whoſe piety and vertue is atteſted by thoſe who were no Friends of our Religion) affirm that he heard and ſaw ſuch things as he reports; and we will be content to abate them the Apoſtles, and ſuch a multitude of people, as heard God ſay he would *Glorifie his Name*, in our Saviour. And in what Glory hath that falſe Prophet appeared ſince he left the World? Whoſe eyes hath he ſtruck out, with the brightneſs of his countenance? Nay, by whom hath he been ſo much as ſeen ſince he was buried? I need not put the queſtion about his Reſurrection,

surrection, for they never pretended it. Only the Scottish people would not believe when he died, that he was really dead, but said he was taken up to Heaven, as *Jesus* was. And *Omar*, one of his successors, threatned death to them that should say he was dead; for he was only gone away as *Moses* did into the Mount, and would return again. From whence perhaps arose that vulgar error among us, that the *Mahumedans* expect the return of their Prophet *. But *Abu Becri* proved to them out of the *Alcoran*, that He was to die as other Prophets before him, and so appeased *Omar* and the multitude.

* See Pocock. in Gregor. Abul Phar. p. 180. 264.

And was it ever heard that the Holy Ghost fell down upon him, in a visible shape while he lived? There is not one of his own followers (as the learned Mr. *Pocock* assures us) who makes any mention, so much as of the Pigeon, which, as we commonly tell the tale, was wont to flie to his ear, as if it whispered some revelation to him. There was not that small imitation, of what is recorded of our Saviour. Much less was there any such glorious body seen descending on him, as that which came down like a Dove, and crowned our Saviours head. The Heavens

vens never opened to him; nor was he transfigured in the preſence of any of his diſciples. Where are the Books that can tell us of any ſuch thing? or ſo much as of any miracles, which he wrought to confirm his Doctrine? He himſelf ſays in his *Alcoran* more than once, that *he was not ſent with Miracles, but with Arms.* And though his followers afterward pretended that he did work miracles, yet they never pretend they were done frequently; and moſt of them are very ridiculous and uſeleſs; and their learned men do not at all rely upon them, nor think he proved his Prophecy by this means. There is no news of any blind-mans eyes that he opened, or of his making the lame to walk, or cleanſing a poor Leper; much leſs of a dead-mans hearing his voice, and ariſing out of his grave, and of ſuch like things done by his followers: which we are ſure, from eye-witneſſes, our Lord did, and gave thoſe that teſtifie it power to do the ſame wonders. And if we go to enquire of the Witneſs of *Water*, in Holineſs of Doctrine and Life; what a ſink of dirty ſtuff is his *Alcoran?* The pleaſures of the fleſh are the higheſt that he had in his thoughts to propound to his followers. His Heaven is no better than a ſenſual Paradiſe.

radise. But as for the joys of the Holy Ghost, or a taste of any spiritual delights, he seems to have had no more sense of them than a Swine. How should he, being an impure lascivious beast himself; who had seventeen Wives, besides Concubines? And not content with these, took another mans Wife (the wife of his servant *Zaid*) and pretended a revelation for it. Which, he had the impudence to say, told him that God was not only well pleased he should have her, but took it ill he had abstained so long from her, out of fear what the world would say. Whereas he ought to have feared God, rather than men. What could be expected from such a Brute, but such a Book as he has left; a mere heap or dunghill rather of filthy nonsence? And if we enquire further for the Witness of BLOUD, we can find none but the *Bloud* of other men, which bears witness that he was a false Prophet. For his business was to shed the bloud of his opposers, rather than to give his own, as a testimony to the truth. The sword was his principal weapon, to subdue men to his belief. He did not perswade them by arguments, but compelled them to yield by force of arms. *Go*, says he, in the xix. Section of the *Alcoran*, and *kill all those who*

will

will not be converted. He was a Murderer as well as a Lyar (like the firſt Deceiver of all) ſo that to ſave their Bodies rather than their Souls, his neighbours found it the beſt way to ſubmit themſelves to his yoke. Did our bleſſed Saviour uſe any ſuch violence? Did he come with a ſword in his hand and ſay, Yield your underſtandings, or your throats? No, *he came not to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave them.* He would not let his Apoſtles call for fire from Heaven to conſume any body, though it had been as eaſie for him to do, as to ſend the Holy Ghoſt in fiery tongues upon them. He never did any miracle to the hurt of the ſmalleſt living creature; though it would have been recompenſed by a multitude of noble cures, that he wrought for their owners. It did not pleaſe him, that one of his ſervants cut off but the ear of *Malchus*, though it was in *his* defence. He was the *good ſhepherd*, who would not kill the ſheep, but laid down his life for them. This we commemorate perpetually, to his eternal praiſe: whereas the falſe Prophet hath left no other memory, but that he was more like a Wolf than a Shepherd; for he came for nothing but to worry and deſtroy.

But he doth not deserve so much regard, as to be thus seriously confuted; were not all this said, rather to make us sensible of the excellence of our own Religion, than to disprove that which was taught by him. Whose greatest wisdome was, that he chose to begin to make his Proselytes and plant his Religion, among a company of rude People; who were more like Beasts, I told you, than Men. If they had been Men of any understanding, one cannot imagine how they should have given credit to such ill contrived tales, as those which he invented. But we are told by his own followers that the People of *Mecca* (a place famous for his Tomb at this day) could neither write nor read, but were perfectly ignorant. Nay, *Mahomet* himself was wont to say, that *he was sent by God to an illiterate Nation.* Which they expound of the *Arabians* about *Mecca*; who were not *People of the Book*, as they call the Jews and Christians, but as ignorant as they came out of their Mothers Womb (says one of their own Authors) having never learnt the art of writing, or of casting account. Which shows how vastly different the beginnings of that Religion were, from those of ours; which was preached to the wisest and politest People upon Earth, as

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that was to the moſt rude and ſtupid. The *Greeks* and *Romans* ſoon ſaw their Countries filled with this new Doctrine. Nor was it in the power of their Philoſophers or Orators to ſtop its progreſs. But there were no ſuch Creatures among thoſe wild *Arabians*, and thoſe Philoſophers who aroſe afterwards of this Sect, were aſhamed, it may be made appear by good proofs, of the Alcoran. So deſtitute they are of any thing whereby to ſupport the Religion of that Book, that they are fain to fly to the Goſpel of Chriſt, from thence to gain ſome authority to it. There, ſays the *Saracen*, in *Theodorus Abucara*; Chriſt wrote theſe words, Αποστέλλω ὑμῖν προφήτην Μωάμεθ λεγόμενον, *I ſend you a Prophet called Mahomet*; but Chriſtians have blotted it out of their Books. For He they fancy is the *Paraclet* whom our Saviour promiſes; and it is one of the Names they beſtow upon this Impoſtor in their writings: who pretends our Saviour foretold his coming, as many have obſerved out of the lxi. Chapter of the *Alcoran**. Which ſhows how hard they are put to their ſhifts, when they fly to us for refuge; and when Ignorance is the greateſt ſecurity and ſupport to their Religion at this day. It is very remarkable that as our Religion was propagated a-

* *Hanksp. Dialog. de Paſſione Domin.*

mong the wiſeſt and moſt learned Nations, by the moſt illiterate men, meerly by the power of the Spirit and the Holy Ghoſt; ſo being thus propagated, all the learned part of the World is of our Religion. They that are of any other, are ignorant of good learning, as their great enemy. But this fears not to be tried, becauſe it is ſure that knowledge is its Friend, and that wiſdome, as our Saviour ſaid, will be juſtified of her Children. Who clearly ſee even from their own Writings that *Mahomet*, at the beſt, was but an hot Enthuſiaſt, who took his own warm thoughts for inſpiration. But he had no aſſurance of what he ſaid: As the humour wrought he was for new illuminations. It was not his fault that his Diſciples had not another Book, which ſhould have put down the *Alcoran*. For as our famous Profeſſor of this Learning * has obſerved out of *Alſhareſtanius*, when he lay ſick of the Fever of which he dyed, he called for Pen and Ink, that he might write them an infallible Book (it ſeems as yet he had not done it) to keep them from erring when he was dead. This *Omar* lookt upon as a frenzy, (though *Mahomet* took it for an inſpiration) and ſaid, *Alas! the ſickneſs of the Apoſtle of God is very ſtrong*: It is ſufficient that we have the Book of God

* *Mr. Pocock, Ib. p.* 178.

(*i.e.*

(*i. e.* the *Alcoran*) there needs no more. But ſome were of another mind: and while the Company that ſtood by contended and ſtrove among themſelves, ſome calling for the Pen and Ink, and others agreeing with *Omar*, that he was beſide himſelf, *Mahomet* cryed out, *Get ye gone, it doth not become you to diſpute before me:* and ſo there was an end. But ſome bewail this as a great misfortune, that he did not write them ſuch a Book, as he then had in his Head: that is, more frenzies and ravings of his brain-ſick imagination.—— But it is time to have done with this: which I have ſaid not meerly to ſhow how ſenceleſs that Religion is, which hath over-ſpread ſo great a part of the World; but how happy we are who are taught by our Lord and Maſter Chriſt Jeſus. Whoſe faith relies upon ſuch certain, evident and divine grounds, that if we did but live according to it; we need not fear but by its power and force it would overcome and vanquiſh the other, though ſupported by never ſo numerous followers. The Lord of his infinite mercy quicken our Faith, that we may out-live them; for it is plain we can ſo far out-reaſon them; that there is no more compariſon between our grounds and theirs, than there is between the wiſeſt man that ever

was, and thoſe blocks of *Mecca* that could neither write nor read.

II. The only Religion that can come into any competition with ours, is that of *Moſes*: who indeed was ſent of God, and as became a faithful ſervant of his, in the Houſe or Family committed to his charge, followed his orders and honeſtly teſtified and reported thoſe things which God commanded him to ſpeak, iii. *Hebr.* 5. But if you ſeriouſly weigh what hath been ſaid, you will find the *Jews* had not ſuch weighty Arguments to perſwade them to believe on *Moſes*, as we have to believe in *Jeſus*; who hath abrogated a great part of that Religion.

And *firſt* for the Witneſs of the FATHER, the *Jews* ſay, ix. Joh. 29. *We know that God ſpake to Moſes.* But how did they know it? What evidence were they able to give themſelves of it? If it had pleaſed them to lay aſide their paſſion, and look beyond the prejudices of their education, the proof of it would have appeared ſo ſlender in compariſon with the aſſurances they might have had of his *ſpeaking to Jeſus*; that they would never have added thoſe ſcornful words, which there

there follow; *as for this fellow we know not whence he is.* God appeared indeed to *Moſes* in the Buſh; and ſaid to him, iii. *Exod.* 6. *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob.* And bids him ſay to the Children of *Iſrael,* to whom he ordered him to go, *I am hath ſent me to you,* verſ. 14. But which of the *Iſraelites* ſtood by, when God ſpake theſe words to him? What perſon was there like *John* Baptiſt, to be a Witneſs of this Voice, which was his Commiſſion? What Creature was there with him (but the Flock he was feeding) that could come afterward and ſay, I was preſent and heard God call to him out of the Buſh? Doth the Voice ſay any where, *I am hath ſent HIM*; as if it ſpake to others beſides himſelf? or what words did he himſelf hear, comparable to thoſe which God ſpake to our Saviour, ſaying, *Thou art my Son,* my well-beloved *Son?* Nor was the manner alike wherein theſe two Voices were delivered. One out of the *Buſh,* the other from *Heaven.* And the Glory wherewith this came to *Moſes,* was much inferiour to the glorious appearance of the Holy Ghoſt deſcending upon Jeſus. An *Angel of the Lord* you read appeared then to *Moſes in a flame of fire,* verſ. 2. But the flame was *in the midſt*

midſt of the Buſh, not upon *Moſes*. Whereas the *Holy Ghoſt*, not an Angel of the Lord, came down at our Saviour's Baptiſm, when he *was ſent*; and not into ſome diſtant place, but *lighted upon HIM*, and there remained. God therefore is ſaid *to DWELL in the Buſh*, xxxiii. Deut. 16. but never to *dwell* in *Moſes*; and the dwelling of God there, was only by the Preſence and Miniſtry of an Angel. Whereas now Jeſus himſelf is the *dwelling place of God*, as I have proved; and it is *God himſelf*, that dwells in him. The Divine Majeſty came upon him, and there it ſetled its abode in his Perſon. Who is *God manifeſted in the fleſh*; and whoſe Glory we behold, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father; which cannot be ſaid of any other man.

All this is ſo plain, that *Moſes* himſelf ſaw this appearance of God to him (though ſufficient to perſwade him that he was *ſent of God*, becauſe he heard him ſpeak to him out of the Buſh) would not prove a demonſtration to others; who did not hear or ſee any thing to make them believe him, nor had any credible witneſſes to juſtifie this beſide himſelf. He ſays as much afterward to him that ſent him, *Behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice*;

voice; for they will ſay, the Lord hath not appeared unto thee. iv. *Exod.* 1. And how could he confute them, when they made this exception? unleſs he had ſome ſenſible demonſtration to give them that God was with him; which God immediately furniſhes him withall *(ver.* 2.) though nothing like to the Power of our Saviour, as you ſhall hear preſently. All the miracles he wrought were as ſhort of our Lords, as His firſt Commiſſion was; which you ſee plainly was nothing ſo noble, nothing ſo clear, as that of our bleſſed Saviour's. *Moſes* himſelf is ſenſible of it, and confeſſes he wanted ſome *Witneſs* that God ſpake to him; and that he knew not what to ſay, when the *Iſraelites* bade him prove it. But our Lord needed not to call for any Witneſs; *John* the Baptiſt a great Prophet, as they themſelves allowed, was ready of himſelf (for it was his office) to declare openly that *he ſaw the Spirit deſcending from Heaven, like a Dove, and abiding on him. He ſaw, and bare record that this is the Son of God:* as the Voice from Heaven, in his audience alſo, pronounced him. Which a great many People, if need were, could afterward certifie; who concluded *that an Angel ſpake to him*, as you have heard from S. *John*'s teſtimony. xii. 29.

2. Now

2. Now if you proceed further and ask for some Witness of *Moses* his authority, like to that of the WORD (the second Witness to our Saviour) who can hear any thing of it? Do we ever read a word of *Moses* his appearing in such a Glory, as our Lord Jesus did to his first Martyr S. *Steven*, and to S. *Paul* and to his beloved Disciple? Nay, where are the Witnesses that say he was so much as transfigured when he was upon the Mount; or doth he himself ever affirm it? When was his Rayment made as white as Snow? or where (as I shall examine more hereafter) was the *bright cloud* covering the Mount, which was all cloathed with darkness? we read indeed that when he came down *his face shone*, but not in so bright and glorious a manner as our Saviour's did when he went up into the Holy Mount, and especially after he ascended into Heaven. Then S. *Steven*, as I have said, *saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing at his right hand*; an honour never given to any Angel in Heaven. And the Apostle of the *Gentiles* saw him again, in a light *greater than that of the Sun at Noonday*. And to S. *John* he appeared as the KING OF KINGS AND THE LORD OF LORDS, in such a Majesty as he was not

not able to bear, but made him *fall at his feet as dead.* He that weighs ſuch things as theſe will ſee, that all the glory of *Moſes* (to uſe S. *Paul*'s words, 2 *Cor.* iii. 10.) *was no glory in this reſpect, by reaſon of the glory that excelleth.*

3. Then if you look for the Teſtimony of the HOLY-GHOST, I have already noted that it never came down upon him, as it did upon the Founder of our Religion. Much leſs did he ſend it upon ſome ſelect Men after he was dead, who ſhould do as great wonders as himſelf. And ſtill much leſs did he beſtow it upon all the People, as our Lord did for a while, upon all Believers. There is not the ſmalleſt foot-ſtep of any ſuch Honour or Power that he had. For He did not communicate a portion of his Spirit to the LXX. Elders, who were choſen to be his Aſſiſtants; but *the Lord ſaid to him, I will come down, and take of the Spirit which is upon thee, and put it upon them,* xi. Num. 17. which words do not ſignifie, it is true, that he had leſs, but only that they had more of the Spirit, than before: yet He did not ſo much as lay his hands upon them that they might receive it, but *God took of the ſpirit which was on him, and gave it to the LXX. Elders;* even

even to thoſe two who were not there preſent at the Tabernacle, but remained ſtill in the camp, *ver.* 25, 26.

4. If you go therefore next to the Teſtimony of WATER, how tranſparent is the Purity of our Saviours Doctrine, above that of *Moſes*. Whoſe Laws though they contained nothing diſhoneſt, yet burdened the people, to prevent a greater miſchief of their running into Idolatry, with a number of precepts which in themſelves had no goodneſs at all to commend them. Nay, the Letter of the very moral Law laid reſtraints only upon the outward man, ſo that they who were ſubject to it little regarded the purifying of their ſpirits, from thoſe irregular paſſions and naughty affections, which our Lord expreſly prohibits. There were many things alſo indulged in thoſe days, which our Lord doth not allow. Whoſe deſign was, not only to purge the heart, and make the ſpirit of men much better by all his precepts; but to advance them to the nobleſt degree of purity and goodneſs. Where do you read in the Books of *Moſes*, ſuch precepts of meekneſs, of mortifying fleſhly luſts, of kindneſs to all, and tender compaſſion, of truſt in God, of contentedneſs with the preſent,

preſent, and hope of his mercy in another world, as are frequent and obvious in the Goſpel of Chriſt? Nay, in what place of the Law do you find ſo much as one command or exhortation to Pray, much leſs to Pray without ceaſing, and to Pray (not for riches, and victory over enemies, and long life, but) for the Divine Grace and favour, for the Holy Spirit, for remiſſion of ſins, and for Eternal Life? And now I mention that word, I cannot but deſire you to conſider how low and poor the Promiſes of *Moſes* were, compared with thoſe of our Saviour, who *hath brought in a better Hope*. Of which they could ſee ſo little (ſo dim was the light) in the Law of *Moſes*, that a whole Sect of men who believed in him and received his Law, caſt away all hope of obtaining good things in another life, and denied the Reſurrection of the Dead. And we muſt add to all this, that *Moſes* was but the Light of that one Nation; whereas our Lord ſays, more than once, *I am the Light of the* WORLD, viii. *John* 12. ix. 5. *Moſes* waſhed the *Bodies* of the *Jews*; but now the *hearts* of the unclean *Gentiles are purified by Faith*, xv. *Acts* 9. And if you enquire further into the purity of *Moſes* his life, you will find it was not without

out flaws and blemiſhes: for *he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips*, and could not bring the people to their reſt. But our Lord was perfectly free from all ſpot, the Lamb of God without blemiſh: who never ſpake the leaſt word amiſs, no not in the midſt of ſuch torments as *Moſes* never endured.

5. For if you paſs on to conſider what ſufferings and BLOUD teſtifie; Alas! what is the Bloud of Bulls and of Goats, to the precious Bloud of *Jeſus*? Did *Moſes* ſeal that Covenant of which he was the Miniſter, or did he ſprinkle the Book of the Covenant, with his own bloud? Did he *purge* away *the ſins* of the people *by himſelf*, as our Saviour, we read, did? 1. *Hebr.* 3. or ſanctifie them *by the offering of his own body* once for all, as it is, 10. *Hebr.* 10? Did he die to bear Witneſs to the Truth? or witneſs ſuch a good confeſſion before *Pharaoh*, as *Jeſus* before *Pontius Pilate*? Was it ever heard, that by the enduring of a ſhameful and cruel death, he declared to all, the certainty of his Prophecy? Upon what Altar was he offered? And for what cauſe did he become a ſacrifice? This was peculiar to *Jeſus*, to ſuffer ſuch things as no man ever did; and for this

this very cauſe, becauſe he ſaid He was the Son of God.

6. *Moſes* then had need to do ſome miracles to confirm his prophecy, ſince he fell ſhort in many other things of giving ſatisfaction. Such as we have, I mean, who abound in Witneſſes to our belief; and hear even this Witneſs, on which the *Jews* heretofore relied, ſpeak more plainly and powerfully to us than it did to them. The SPIRIT of the Lord was upon *Moſes*, the people ſaw by the wonders he did, which moved them to follow him. Though now they are ſo fooliſhly mad againſt our Saviour, that to rob us of this Argument, the *Jews* ſay *Moſes* his miracles did not prove him to be ſent of God, yet it is manifeſt by their ſtory, they were, in a manner, his only glory: I am ſure the principal, or that which firſt induced their forefathers to give any credit to him. For when he asked of God a ſign to give the people (who otherwiſe he foreſaw would queſtion the apparition of the Angel to him) that they might believe as much as himſelf, and acknowledge that God ſent him, He granted him a power of doing ſuch wonders as fleſh and bloud could not do, which, it ſeems, he

thought the propereſt means to convince them. *What is that in thy hand, ſaith the Lord* (immediately after the words mentioned before, iv. *Exod.* 1.) *and he ſaid, a rod. And the Lord ſaid, Caſt it on the ground. And he caſt it on the ground, and it became a Serpent, and* Moſes *fled from before it. And the Lord ſaid unto him again, Put forth thine hand and take it by the tail, and he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand; that they may believe the Lord God of their Fathers hath appeared unto thee, ver.* 2, 3, 4, 5. This was the end for which this miracle was to be wrought. To which he adds another, that if they would *not believe him, nor hearken to the voice of the firſt*, they might be convinced by the ſecond; or if they would believe neither, he gave him power to do a third, and bade him turn the water of the river into bloud, *ver.* 7, 8. And accordingly you read, he went *and did the ſigns in the ſight of the people, and the people believed: and when they heard God had viſited them, bowed their heads and worſhipped, ver.* 30, 31. After this indeed they disbelieved again, till God drowned their enemies in the red Sea, and *then the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his ſervant Moſes*, xiv. *Exod.* 31. But were any

of

of theſe works ſo wonderful, and ſo powerful to move belief, as thoſe which our Saviour did? It may deſerve a diſcourſe (on a fitting occaſion) on purpoſe to ſhow how much *Moſes* came behind him in this, as well as in all the reſt. Both the number and greatneſs of our Saviour's works were as far beyond his, as the ſtrength of a Gyant is beyond that of an Infant. He was cut off in the midſt of his days, and yet in that three years and an half wherein he lived, after the SPIRIT of God came upon him at his Baptiſm, he did more wonders than *Moſes* did in forty years; nay, more than had been done from the beginning of the world to that time. And if you regard the quality of them, *Moſes* his taking the Serpent by the tail, and turning it into a rod again, was not comparable to our Saviour's caſting out Devils, treading upon the old Serpent, breaking in pieces all his power, by healing all manner of ſickneſs and diſeaſe; and giving his Diſciples alſo the ſame authority and power which was viſible in himſelf. Nor was *Moſes* his hand becoming leprous when he put it into his boſom, and its being reſtored again by the ſame means, any thing like to the miracles of *Jeſus* in curing ſo many old Lepers of all

ſorts, both *Jews* and *Samaritans*, whereſoever they came to him to implore his charity. *Moſes* brought a ſtrong East wind, which cauſed the Sea to go back, and leave the bottom dry for the *Iſraelites* to march through; but this was nothing ſo wonderful as our Lord's walking upon the Sea, as it had been dry land, and commanding *Peter* to accompany him in the midſt of a boiſterous wind; and his laying his commands upon ſuch tempeſts and raging waves, and the fiſhes alſo, which all obeyed him. Nay, that great miracle of feeding them with Manna, was not ſo ſtrange as our Lord's ſatisfying great multitudes, with five or ſeven loaves and two ſmall fiſhes: which were not proportionable to ſo many thouſand ſtomachs as were filled by them; as the quantity of Manna was to the Armies of the *Iſraelites*. Beſides that you never read a word of *Moſes* his opening the eyes of the blind, much leſs of his raiſing the dead, which our Lord did ſundry times. I need ſay no more to ſhow how inferiour he was to *Jeſus* even in regard of his miracles; concerning which the multitude ſaid truly, *It never was ſo ſeen in Iſrael*, ix. *Matth.* 33. And yet this was the only thing that convinced that Nation at the firſt, and made

them

them believe in *Moſes* (as I have prov'd) before they heard God ſpeak to them, by an Angel, from mount *Sinai*, at the giving of the Law. That was the moſt amazing thing of all; but was after they came out of *Egypt*, and a great while after they had believed *Moſes* was ſent of God, as they ſaw then more fully: and was nothing comparable neither to *Jeſus*'s ſpeaking himſelf to ſome of the Apoſtles out of Heaven, and ſending the Holy Ghoſt from thence, with the gift of tongues and divers others, upon them all. And after all that hath been ſaid of the miracles which the SPIRIT wrought by him, where are the miracles that it wrought for him? Did *Moſes* prove himſelf a true Prophet by riſing again, after he was dead and buried? To whom did he appear? With whom did he eat and drink? Or who can ſay that he aſcended up into Heaven? To whom did he appear in glory, except it was to our Saviour (and ſome of his Diſciples) in honour of whom, it ſeems he had then the favour, and not before, to ſhine in that luſtre wherein they beheld him. In ſhort, God gave not *the Spirit by meaſure* unto *Jeſus*, as you have heard before: He had not ſuch a limited portion of it as *Moſes* had, who appears by theſe

things to have been only a *ſervant* over the *houſe of God*, in which our Saviour had a power as a *Son*, and that over his *own houſe*, iii. *Hebr.* 5, 6.

Thus much hath been ſaid to ſhow the great honour God hath done us in making us Chriſtians. Whoſe Faith, you ſee, ſtands upon ſuch well-laid grounds, that even they who were taught by God had none comparable to them. Herein we have a felicity above all other men that have ever been, if we be but ſenſible of it; that we are not required to receive any thing from God, but upon ſuch reaſons, as far excel thoſe which demanded belief of men in former times, but had not ſuch ſtrength to enforce it. Bleſſed be God, ſhould we all ſay,

A PRAYER.

BLeſſed be God, who hath not done ſo for any people. He hath ſhown us HIMSELF, *his* WORD, *and the* HOLY GHOST. Iſrael *hath not ſeen his Glory,*

ſo

so as it shines in our eyes. And as for his Power and Might, they have not known them, no more than the Promises and the Laws, whereby he now governs us. He hath given us a better Covenant, *founded upon a* better Bloud, *which hath brought in also a better* Hope, *and is confirmed by a more* powerful Spirit. *Blessed be his Goodness, that our eyes read, and our ears hear those things, which many Prophets and righteous men desired to see and hear, but could not see nor hear them.* For it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto us by them that have preached the Gospel unto us, which the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, which things the Angels desire to look into.

O Bless the Lord with us, ye Angels of his that excel in strength; praise him and magnifie him for ever. O all ye Powers of the Lord; bless ye the Lord, praise him and magnifie him for ever. O ye Spirits and Souls of the righteous, bless ye the Lord, praise him and magnifie him for ever. Praise him all ye Apostles and Prophets; praise him all ye Martyrs and Confessors; praise him all ye glorious Lights, who have made the Gospel of Christ to shine throughout the world. Praise

the Father Almighty; praise his Eternal WORD; *praise the Holy Ghost; who have made our Faith to stand, not in the wisdom of men, but in the mighty Power of God. Praise him for the Incarnation, the Life, the Death, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Glorification of the Lord* Jesus: *who hath given us* strong Consolation, *by that sure and stedfast hope, which, throughout all these means, he hath setled in our hearts.*

O *praise him for his marvellous love to us; whom he hath called after a* glorious manner, *and by* an amazing vertue, *to the knowledge of Christ; by whom* his Divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. *And make us who are so nearly concerned in this love, to be very sensible how great it is: which hath not only* called us to his Heavenly Kingdom, *but made us sure and certain by so many Witnesses, that* Jesus *is the Lord of all, the King of infinite Majesty, Power and Glory. Let our souls never cease to* show forth *and publish* the vertues *and powerful operations* of him who hath called us into his marvellous light. *Let our mouths be filled with his praise all the day long, who out of the riches of his mercy hath made us who were not his people, to be* a chosen generation, an holy nation,

nation, a peculiar people *to himſelf.*

O that our Faith may grow exceedingly, *and be deeply rooted and grounded in our hearts. And as it ſtands upon the ſureſt foundations, ſo we may be built up in it with the moſt aſſured confidence, and ſtand unſhaken and immoveable in it unto the end. And as thou haſt differenced us from all other people, in the clearneſs of that Light, which lets us ſee that ours is the* moſt holy Faith: *ſo help us by thy grace to diſtinguiſh our ſelves from all others, by* holding the myſtery of Faith in a pure Conſcience, *and by the upright actions of an unblameable life.*

O that the light of Chriſtians may ſo ſhine before men, that others ſeeing their good works may glorifie thee our Heavenly Father. O that it may diſperſe the darkneſs, which over-ſpreads ſo great a part of the world. That all impoſtures may be diſcovered; and they that live in error may be brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jeſus. *O that his Dominion may reach from Sea to Sea, even unto the worlds end. Let them who dwell in the moſt deſert places kneel before him, and his enemies lick the duſt. Let all Kings of the Earth adore him, and all Nations do him ſervice. Kindle in the hearts of Princes and Nobles an holy ambition to advance*

vance his Glory. Inspire the hearts of all Bishops and Priests with an ardent zeal for the conversion of Souls. And dispose the hearts of those who are in error, that they may be apt and ready to receive thy sacred truth. Plant thy Gospel, where it hath not yet been, and replant it where it hath been rooted out: And give us grace who have long been thine own vineyard, to bring forth plenty of good fruit. That our lives may be as holy as our faith; and we may convince Jews, Turks, *and all other Infidels, that thou art among us, and that* Jesus *whom we worship is the Lord. To him with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be Glory and Praise among all mankind, and throughout all Ages, world without end.*

Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Other neceſſary Uſes we are to make of their Teſtimony.

THere is no great skill required, to ſee the difference between that Holy Religion which we profeſs; and all others that are entertained in the reſt of the World. Some we muſt have; and it is as palpable that this is incomparably the moſt excellent, as it is that there is any Religion at all. There is no Nation ſo barbarous, but pays ſome reſpect and ceremony (to uſe the phraſe of *Tully* when he defines Religion) to ſome Superiour and more excellent Nature, which we call Divine. *Though they are ignorant what kind of God it becomes them to have, yet they know a God muſt be had, and muſt be worſhipped.* Their own mind teaches them this, as ſoon as they caſt their eyes upon the admirable frame of the World; which all

all naturally conclude muſt have had ſome moſt wiſe and mighty Builder. But what reſpect and reverence that is, which will be pleaſing to him, they are very uncertain; it is manifeſt, by the various ways they have invented to expreſs their Devotion. They all with one conſent acknowledge a neceſſity of a Revelation to inſtruct them; for there is no Nation but pretends to have received ſome things, by the inſtinct, inſpiration, or apparition of their Gods. That which pure natural reaſon dictates, is not to be found ſimple and unmixt in any Nation under Heaven. For if we ſhould ſtand meerly to that, it hath ever reſolved that the worſhip of God conſiſts in the ſtudy of Wiſdome, Juſtice and all other Vertues. Which as they are moſt eminent in God, ſo he is beſt pleaſed with them in us. And they that addict themſelves to reſemble him in this manner, are the men that ſhall obtain his favour. There are a number of notable ſayings both in Heathen and Chriſtian Writers to this purpoſe. But when all this is ſaid and acknowledged, Men will offend againſt theſe Rules of Vertue: and what ſhall they do then? what will make him ſatisfaction, and procure a reconciliation with him (whom they have reaſon to think their offences have

have made their enemy) is a thing that can never be certainly reſolved without a Revelation. Without which alſo we can have little ſecurity of the immortality of our Souls, and of the life to come. Which hath inclined all Mankind to liſten after a Revelation, and to catch at any thing which pretends to come from God to them. For as *Plato* acknowledges (when he ordains there ſhould be no alterations made in the ancient Cuſtomes about Sacrifices, becauſe) *it is not poſſible for mortal nature to know any thing of theſe matters*, without it. No, ſays he, (not long after in the ſame Book *) as no body ſhall ever perſwade me that there is any greater Piety, than true Vertue, and as there is nothing more excellent can be taught, than how thoſe that honour Vertue ſhould rightly worſhip God with Sacrifices and other rites of purifying: So *none can teach this*, ἀ μὴ θεὸς ὑφηγοῖτο, unleſs *God ſhow him the way, and be his Guide and Leader* in ſo excellent a work. But if we ſearch into all the records that are in the World, what is there that can ſtand in competition with the Chriſtian way of worſhipping God, or pretend to come with ſuch authority from him? I have examined thoſe that have moſt to ſay for themſelves; and they can produce

* *In Epinom.*

produce no ſuch *WITNESSES* as Chriſtianity doth: No, not that ancient Revelation made by God to *Moſes*. As for the old Pagan ways, which were very various, I am aſhamed to mention them. It is manifeſt they ſuffered themſelves to be cheated by impure Spirits, and took the anſwers of Dæmons for the Oracles of God. But *ask now of the days that are paſt, which were before us, ſince the day that God created Man upon the Earth, and ask from the one ſide of Heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any ſuch thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it*, that God indeed appeared among Men, and was *manifeſt in the fleſh*: as is evident by all the ſigns and wonders and mighty deeds, by voices from Heaven, by his Reſurrection from the dead, and all the other Witneſſes which have teſtified this truth to the world. Ask again, hath God ever aſſured Men of any thing, by ſo many and ſuch evident teſtimonies, as thoſe which I have produced. *Unto us it was ſhown, that we might know*, that Jeſus is the Lord, and *beſide him there is no other* (if I may again allude to the words of *Moſes*, iv. Deut. 34, 35.) *out of Heaven* he hath made us hear his voice that he might inſtruct us; and *upon Earth* he hath ſhown us his great wonders,

wonders, *that every tongue might confeſs Jeſus is the Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.*

III.

That now is the next thing I am to preſs, as a neceſſary conſequence of what hath been ſaid in the foregoing Treatiſe. Though there were ſuch ſlender proofs, in compariſon with ours, that God ſpake to *Moſes*, and though others, as I ſaid, were drawn away by the ſubtilties of evil Angels, yet they all believed and gave great reverence to that which was delivered to them. Every Nation gladly received and held faſt, that which did but pretend to come from Heaven. Which muſt needs extremely reproach us and put us to eternal ſhame, if we having better evidences, ſhould not only be Believers, but have a ſtronger faith in Jeſus. That which *Plato* thought was to be wiſht for, is now come to paſs: *God is come to be our Guide and Director.* The very wiſdome of the Father hath appeared to teach us. He that made all the World, is come down hither to reform us. The WORD IS MADE FLESH, that as he had *Principalum in cælis* (to uſe the words of *Irenæus**) the Lordſhip in Heaven, ſo he might

* L. 4. cap. 37.

might have *Principatum in terra*, the ſame Soveraignty upon Earth. He hath appeared alſo in wonderful and aſtoniſht brightneſs; to convince us of his authority, and to make us know aſſuredly that he is *God bleſſed for ever*. Shall we not then hear his words? ſhall we not deliver up our ſelves to receive his Heavenly inſtruction, which came with ſuch powerful demonſtration? God forbid that any of us ſhould be ſo perverſe, as hearing ſuch *WITNESSES* ſpeak unto us for the Lord Jeſus, we ſhould give no credit to them.

I cannot but believe, as S. *Auſtin* * excellently diſcourſes, "that if *Plato* now lived, "and would vouchſafe to anſwer my Que"ſtions; or rather if any Scholar of his, "being perſwaded that *truth is not to be "ſeen with corporeal eyes, but by a pure "mind; and that nothing hinders the ſight "more than a life addicted to luſt, and falſe "Images of ſenſible things, which, impreſſed "on us, beget various errors, and that there"fore the mind is to be purified, that it may "behold that unchangeable beauty, which is "always the ſame, and always like it ſelf*; "If, I ſay, a Scholar of his thus taught by "him, ſhould ask him, whether in caſe "there ſhould be a Man, Great and Divine, "that

* *L. de vera Relig. cap.* 3.

"that ſhould perſwade the People at leaſt "to believe ſuch things, though they could "not perceive them (or if they did per- "ceive them, were ſo ingaged in vulgar "errors that they durſt not or could not "oppoſe them) He would not judge him "worthy of Divine honour: I believe he "would Anſwer, that this could not be "done by Man; unleſs perhaps the *very* "*power and wiſdome of God* ſhould honour "ſome perſon (who was not taught of men, "but from the Cradle illuminated by the "moſt intimate knowledge of things) with "ſo great a grace, and ſtrengthen him with "ſuch reſolution, and bear him up with "ſuch a majeſty, that contemning all things "that evil Men deſire, and induring all "things that they dread, and doing all "things that they admire, he ſhould con- "vert Mankind, with equal kindneſs and "authority, to ſo wholeſome a Faith. And "he would add, that it was to no purpoſe "to ask him what the Honours are which "ought to be given to ſuch a perſon, when "it is eaſie to be diſcerned, what honour is "due to the wiſdome of God: by the gui- "dance and governance of which, he "would ſingularly deſerve of Mankind, "and do ſome thing for their Salvation, "proper only to himſelf, and which was

" above Men to do. Now if theſe things,
" which I have ſuppoſed, be really done, if
" there be good records of them, if from
" a Country, in which alone One God was
" worſhipped, and where ſuch a perſon was
" to be born, there came choſen men, who
" by their Vertues and their Sermons have
" kindled in Mens breaſts the flame of the
" Divine love, and have left the inlight-
" ned Earth under a moſt wholeſome Diſ-
" cipline, if every where it is preached,
" that *in the beginning was the Word, and*
" *the Word was with God, and the Word*
" *was God*, if to the perceiving and em-
" bracing this, (that the Soul may be cu-
" red, and recover ſtrength to entertain
" ſo great a light) the covetous hear ſuch
" words as theſe, *Lay not up your treaſures*
" *upon Earth*, and the luxurious are told,
" that *he who ſoweth to the fleſh, ſhall of*
" *the fleſh reap corruption*, and the proud
" are told, that *he who exalteth himſelf ſhall*
" *be abaſed*, the angry are exhorted *when*
" *one cheek is ſmitten to turn the other*, they
" that live in diſcord are taught, *to love*
" *their enemies*, the ſuperſtitious are in-
" ſtructed, that *the Kingdom of God is with-*
" *in us*, to the curious it is ſaid continually,
" *look not at the things that are ſeen, but to*
" *thoſe which are not ſeen*, and laſtly it is

ſaid

"said to all, *Love not the world, nor the "things that are in the world*; if these "things are read throughout the world, "if they be chearfully heard with great "veneration, if after so much bloud, such "fires, so many crucifixions of Martyrs, "the Church is grown more fertile, and "hath propagated it self to the most bar-"barous Nations, (and to omit the rest) "if men are every where so converted to "God, that every day all mankind an-"swers almost with one voice, LIFT UP "YOUR HEARTS UNTO THE "LORD; why should we drowsily still "continue in a sottish unbelief?

There is nothing can be said in the excuse of such Souls, as having received notice of such a marvellous Love of God to mankind, and such evident proofs that it is no fancy; will not be perswaded to entertain the belief of it. But when light is come into the world, chuse to remain in darkness; and will be guided merely by themselves, when there is a revelation come from God. Which ought to be entertained with the greatest joy, as the thing which the world wanted and wisht for: and without which they could meet with no resolution of their doubts, nor

certain directions how to pleaſe God, whom they had ſo highly offended. In this the Chriſtian Religion gives us full ſatisfaction, and propounds nothing to our practice, but what the wiſeſt men ever ſaid was beſt to be done, and took for the moſt excellent piety. As for that which it propounds to our belief, it is all made credible by this one great Truth, which is proved by a number of Witneſſes, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.* We ought to receive that which ſuch a perſon taught, either with his own mouth, or by thoſe whom he inſpired, and ſent in the ſame manner, as the Father ſent him. For if it be ſo reaſonable, as I have demonſtrated, to be a Believer, then it is as unreaſonable to be an Unbeliever: and no man will be able to open his mouth to juſtifie ſuch a ſin, againſt ſo many Witneſſes as will appear to teſtifie, that they called him to the faith by the cleareſt and the moſt powerful evidences that ever were. For if the *Jews* were bound to believe in *Moſes*, having no more teſtimony from God than you have heard; we are much more bound to believe in *Jeſus*, who hath more and greater Witneſſes that he not only came from God, but is gone to God, and hath all things given into his hands, whether

ther in Heaven or in Earth. As it was ſaid of them therefore (xiv. *Exod. ult.*) that *they believed the Lord and his ſervant Moſes*, ſo let it be ſaid of every one now, that *we believe the Lord and his Son Jeſus.* For this very end were theſe words written by S. *John*, that *we may believe on his Name, ver.* 13. And this is the ſumm of what God would have us to do, the Commandment he hath given us; *That we ſhould believe on the Name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and love one another*, iii. 23. If we do the former, we ſhall ſee an evident conſequence of the latter. For when we are perſwaded that He is the Son of God, we cannot but ſee that we ought to receive every word that he ſays, with affectionate reverence, and to let every thing that is ſaid concerning him into our very hearts; ſo that we fear him, and love him, and become obedient to him, and depend upon his word, and, as he himſelf hath taught us, honour him as we do the Father Almighty.

For we are aſſured by thoſe who heard him, and were with him from the beginning, and were witneſſes of his Reſurrection, and received the Holy Ghoſt from him; that He was the WORD MADE

FLESH; and that the *Word was God*, and *all things were made by him*, and is the *Son of God* not by office only, but in his nature and essence, and having assumed our Flesh, therein reigns *Lord of all* for ever. For what reason should we refuse to receive that, which is so credibly witnessed to be the very Truth of God? They that report these things were so pious, as I have proved, that they cannot be suspected to have invented them; nay, the very end for which they published them, quits them from all suspicion of fraud and forgery. For they aimed at nothing, but by making man sensible of his great Dignity, and the high honour God hath put upon him; to possess his heart with an ardent love to God and to his Neighbour, and to make him perfectly subject unto his will. And is there not great reason, if we believe what these Witnesses say, that we should apply our best endeavours to please him; by living soberly, righteously, and godly, and by abstaining from the least appearance of evil? Think what *Jesus* was, and then resolve with your selves what regard is due to his Word. Will not the wicked man tremble, when he hears him say, that none shall go to Heaven but they that do the will of his Father which is in Heaven?

ven? Then he does not believe that theſe are the words of the Son of God, or does not mind what he reads. Who can with any face call him Lord, Lord, and not acknowledge that he ought to do the things that he ſays? And to acknowledge this, and not do thoſe things, what a madneſs is that; if we believe our Lord is able to call us to a ſevere account for our neglect of his will? What is there that can recommend chaſtity and purity of heart to our affection, together with mercifulneſs, meekneſs, peaceableneſs, poverty or contentedneſs of ſpirit, the humility of little children, faith in God's providence, and ſuch like vertues, if this will not; that the Son of God hath preacht them to the world as the moſt amiable qualities in the eyes of God, without which we ſhall never ſee him, nor inherit his Heavenly Kingdom? Are not theſe his words? Do not his Sermons teach us theſe Leſſons? And if we do theſe things, does he not ſay we ſhall *have everlaſting life*, and *enter into his joy*, and *ſee the glory which God hath given him?* For what cauſe do we queſtion whether this be the way to happineſs? Do not the ſame *Witneſſes* which tell us that he is the *Son of God*, teſtifie withall that he came to teach us

Gods will, and that this is his will, which by the Gospel is declared unto us? Why do we not seriously believe it then, let me ask again? Are not the Witnesses good, who affirm that Jesus is the Son of God? Have we not examined them, and find no cause why we should reject them? Or will you receive nothing upon the credit of a Witness? That's a very strange obstinacy; which rejects so certain a way of knowing many things, that cannot be otherways known.

For the notices of things do not come to us all one way, but by divers means, either by our *Senses*, or by our *Reason* and Discourse, or by *Report*. By all these ways the knowledge of things is conveyed to our Mind: And if we refuse to be informed by any of them, there are a great number of things, certainly true and of great consequence to us, of which we must remain ignorant. That there are other Countries far distant from this where we live, and that such and such things are there to be had, and have been there done, most Men can know by no means but only by report; for there are but few that can go and see. And he that will not receive the testimony of another in this case, deprives

prives himſelf of a conſiderable piece of knowledge, whereof others partake; and which might be as uſeful to him as it proves to them. But if for this wilful loſs he ſhall pretend to aſſign a juſt cauſe; ſaying, that he cannot believe any thing unleſs it be demonſtrated to him by clear and evident conſequences from Principles of known reaſon, he will become ridiculous. For it is abſurd to expect the knowledge of any thing in any other way, but that which is proper for its conveyance to us. To demand a proof of a matter of reaſon, from our ſenſes; or for what we diſcern by our ſenſes, from our reaſon; is equally ridiculous: and ſo it is to demand an evidence for things of Faith (which we know by report only) either from our Senſes or our Reaſon. That there are ſome things come to our notice only by Faith, is plain from what paſſes every day. And it is as plain, that they muſt be proved to be true in their proper way; that is, by the ſoundneſs of the Teſtimony upon which we receive them: As no man requires a reaſon for what he ſees and feels, nor asks that he may ſee with his eyes that of which he reaſons and diſcourſes: ſo he ought not to ſeek for a teſtimony of ſenſe or reaſon, for that which he can know by no way but by report.

port. As for example; no Man demands a reason to prove that the Sun shines; In this his sense gives him satisfaction; and if he were born blind, no reason could prove to him that it was not Night. Nor does any man, that is in his wits, require that he may behold God with his eyes, whom he knows by discourse and the reason of his mind; and knows him also by that to be invisible. In like manner it is altogether preposterous, when a man comes and reports that such a person dyed on such a day; to ask for a reason to prove it, or to demand that he may see it; for it is impossible to see him dye again upon that day. That is not a thing to be known either of those ways, by sense or reason, but only by the testimony of others who were present at that time, and are, we think, worthy of belief. Why do we ask then for any other proof, that Jesus was born of a Virgin at such a time, did such wonderful works, preached such an holy Doctrine, was crucified, dead and buried, rose again from the dead, ascended to Heaven, and sent from thence the Holy Ghost? These are not things now to be seen or felt, nor can we gather them from the meer discourse of our own reason, which tells us nothing of them: But we have them by report from

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a great many *Witnesses*, who say they saw and heard and felt all that which they would have us believe. There is no other use of reason in this case, but only to examine and judge whether this report be credible, and founded in the testimony of God. Now that is evident to any impartial enquirer, from what hath been said concerning these *Witnesses*, whose report there is no reason to suspect, as it is certain it can never be disproved. Why should we then be so much our own enemies, as to deprive our selves of this saving knowledge of Jesus Christ? That is, why do we not give credit to the report of these Witnesses concerning Jesus; since, by the only proper means, whereby such things can be proved, I have made it good that the Father declared him to be his Son; and He appeared in Glory to testify to himself; and the Holy Ghost demonstrated he could be no less; and his Life, Death, Resurrection, and all the rest (of which there were so many upright Witnesses) assure us that it is a certain truth. Would we be so difficult to be perswaded to go to a Man or a Place, where several honest neighbours informed us, upon their word, nay upon their life, we should be promoted to great honor, or be possessed of a fair estate? Do we not

believe

believe one another in our daily traffick? and drive considerable bargains, merely upon the credit we give to some persons, who inform us of the advantage we may make by them? Do not men undertake long journeys, and more dangerous voyages, merely because they are told that such an one is dead to whom they are heir, or that such rich commodities are to be had in exchange for meaner goods? Who is there that does not desire his Witnesses may be accepted and their testimony taken for good proof, either to clear his innocence, or to settle his estate? Now, says the Apostle (immediately after the alledging of all these Witnesses in Heaven and in Earth, to prove the truth of Christianity) *If we receive the Witness of men, the Witness of God is greater: for this is the Witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son.*

The meaning of which is this; If men whose honesty you cannot impeach, give their testimony in a Court of Judicature, it is never disallowed, nor can you be permitted to set it by, and make nothing of it; but it is necessarily admitted, for an end of strife. The weightiest causes are decided, all matters depending are determined

mined and judged, according to the evidence that is given by witneſſes of unblemiſhed faith. *In the mouth of two or three witneſſes* (as the known ſaying was) *every word* (or rather, matter) *is eſtabliſhed.* That is, brought to an iſſue and concluded, if any controverſie have aroſe to unſettle it. Nay, the teſtimony of one man, if we have no reaſon to ſuſpect his credit, is in our own private thoughts, though not in Law, ſatisfaction great enough to aſſure us of the truth of what he ſays: And we think it ſuch a reproach to give him the lye, that we cannot but believe him; finding a deſire in the ſame caſe to be believed our ſelves. Now if things ſtand thus between us and our neighbours, will we not allow God (ſays the Apoſtle) as much as we yield to them? Shall not his word determine and conclude us? When he gives evidence of a thing, ſhall we ſtill diſpute it with him? That, beſides the undutifulneſs of it, is too great a ſtubborneſs. We may rather be taught how to behave our ſelves towards him, by the meaſure men expect from us, and we from them: Yea, God does more deſerve credit than any man; for, as he adds, *the witneſs of God is* GREATER, *i. e.* is of far more validity and certainty;

it may more securely be relied on, than the witness of any men whatsoever. God is not only greater than men, but his *Witness* also or Testimony is greater (which must be carefully noted) it is of more force and strength to support any conclusion; we may more undoubtedly found our faith upon it; because it is not liable to any of those exceptions which may prejudice the best testimony of men. *Two* things there are that lessen the testimony of men, if we compare it with God's, and make it to be of a nature more weak and infirm. The *one* is, that though a man be reputed honest, and therefore we cannot legally except against his Testimony, yet it is possible he may be a deceiver, and we cannot look into his heart to know whether he be or no. We may not be able to prove the least deceit by him, in what he says or ever has said or done; and it is possible he never delivered any thing contrary to truth, or did any thing contrary to justice: but yet we can never free our mind from this thought, since we know not his inward man, that there is a possibility also, it may be otherwise with him. But then *secondly*, suppose him perfectly honest, and that it is impossible he should put a cheat upon us; yet it will be always possible that he may

may be cheated himſelf, becauſe all men are fallible and may be miſtaken. The greateſt integrity in the world cannot ſecure a man, but the weakneſs of his underſtanding, and the ſubtilty of others may ſometimes impoſe upon him: ſo that though he thinks what he ſays to be true, it may be otherwiſe in it ſelf than it is in his thoughts. Herein therefore the Teſtimony of God is GREATER than the teſtimony of men, that it is not liable to either of theſe ſuſpicions; it being utterly impoſſible that he ſhould either be deceived himſelf, or that he ſhould deceive us. He can neither lead us into an error (which we all acknowledge to be contrary to his Goodneſs and Truth) nor fall into one himſelf, which is as contrary to the perfection of his underſtanding, and his Omnipreſent being. The teſtimony of God then being ſo indubitable, that it is above the teſtimony of any men, it ought with all reverence to be received when he declares that *Jeſus is his Son*: for if it were but equal to humane teſtimony, it ought not to be refuſed. Now *this is the WITNESS OF GOD*, ſays the Apoſtle, *which he hath teſtified of his Son*. That is, It being granted to be moſt rational that we ſhould receive the teſtimony of God, nay, give it greater

greater reſpect than we bear to that of men; I aſſure you that the evidence which we give you concerning *Jeſus* is the very teſtimony of God; and therefore do not ſlight it. It is not we that bear witneſs to him, ſo much as God. We do not deſire you to hear merely what we ſay, but what God himſelf hath ſaid, who hath given many aſſurances of this truth. If there were but *two* of them, they might, by your own rules, very well expect to find entertainment; but there are no leſs than *ſix* witneſſes, every one of them Divine, they all ſpeak from God, and therefore you cannot deny your aſſent to what they prove. For the *firſt* witneſs, is *God the Father himſelf*, who called *Jeſus* his well-beloved Son. And the *ſecond*, is the *Word of God*, upon which account, whatſoever he ſays, is God's teſtimony alſo. The Holy Ghoſt, which is the *third*, that *proceeds from the Father*, and came on purpoſe to bear witneſs to his Son. As for the *fourth* (Water) *the Doctrine was of GOD*, his life was the *life of GOD*, *John*'s Baptiſm *was from Heaven*, and he is called (i. *John* 6.) *a man ſent from GOD*. Then, for the *Blood* which is the *fifth* witneſs, it is called *GOD's own Blood*, xx. *Acts* 28. And it appeared to be his, by his gathering

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it up again after it was ſhed, and taking it into the Heavens, where he appears with it in the preſence of God for us. And the laſt of theſe witneſſes is expreſly called the *Spirit of* GOD, xii. *Matth.* 28. So that it is GOD, you ſee, who ſo many ways bears witneſs of his Son; there is ſomething Divine in every one of theſe *Witneſſes*, in thoſe *on Earth* as well as in thoſe *in Heaven*; and therefore we cannot without an affront to GOD reject their teſtimony. For then He would have worſe meaſure from us than men have, and we ſhould give leſs reſpect to ſix Witneſſes of his, than to two or three of our neighbours. If *Jeſus* came not with clear demonſtrations, with fulneſs of proof, then deny him any admittance; but if God hath ſo many ways juſtified him to be his Son, if his Life was ſo excellent, his Bloud ſo holy, his Spirit ſo Divine, then we ſhall never be able to juſtifie it before any knowing man, much leſs before God, if we do not believe him: and that heartily and fully, in every thing; no more doubting of the truth of what he ſays, than we do of thoſe things which our eyes and our ears report to us, or of thoſe, which are delivered unto us, upon the faith of the whole world.

For which end it ſhould be our endeavour, that our Faith may reſt upon a ſure and ſtrong foundation; and be laid on ſuch grounds, that it may ſtand the faſter, in a time of temptation. The ignorant man's Faith indeed may be as ſtrong, as his that knows moſt, and what he hath learnt by Education, may be ſo confirmed by Cuſtom, that he will never ſtir from it: but is only the effect of Nature, which produces the ſame reſolutions in thoſe who are of other Religions. The Chriſtian way of obtaining a ſtrong Faith, is firſt to *ſee the Son*, and then *to believe on him to everlaſting life*, as our Saviour himſelf teaches us, vi. *John* 40. To *ſee him* is to perceive and diſcern by evident tokens that he is the Son of God, the true way to life: upon which ſight and plain demonſtrations we ought to *believe in him*, and ſubmit unto him, as our Lord. That's the true *Chriſtian Faith*, which flows from knowledge, and is founded upon the underſtanding of what ſuch Witneſſes as theſe ſay concerning *Jeſus*. It relies upon the teſtimony of the *Father*, of the *Word*, and of the *Holy Ghoſt*, is wrought by the *Spirit*, and confirmed by *Water* and *Bloud*. And therefore we ought to ſtudy this place

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of holy Scripture, and have it much in our thoughts, that ſo our *Faith may ſtand in the Power of God.* For otherwiſe, how ſhall we be able to follow the Apoſtolical Precept, which would have us, when we are queſtioned, *to render a reaſon of the hope that is in us,* 1 *Pet.* iii. 15. We may be able to ſtand our ground though we be ignorant of the true cauſes of belief; but the enemies of it will look upon it as a fooliſh obſtinacy, if we have not ſo much underſtanding as to give ſome other account of *our* Faith, than they give for *theirs.* Suppoſe they ſhould ſay, Why are you a Chriſtian? whence is it that you look for a Reſurrection, a Glorious body, and Eternal life in another world? Would they not think us very ſtupid, if we could ſay nothing to them but that ſo we have been always taught, and are reſolved to believe? Would not this be as good a reaſon for them as it is for us; and make us unworthy of the name of Chriſtians, who know our Books no better, which bid us give, and furniſh us with, a reaſonable account? Conſider therefore what Anſwer you would ſhape to them, that ſhould make ſuch a demand. The Apoſtle ſays it is fit they ſhould have a reaſon, what is the beſt that you can offer for their ſatis-

faction? ſhall I tell you? The plain Anſwer is this, That *Jeſus*, whoſe Religion we follow, was the Son of God; and therefore we believe theſe things becauſe the Son of God taught us ſo, who cannot deceive us; and we will not exchange this for any other perſwaſion though we ſhould die for it. It is certain enough that every body who hears this, will preſently conſent to us, that he is a fool who doth not ſtoop to him and comply with us, if it be certain that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. But how do you prove that, will be the next queſtion. Here is the labour, this is our work; and whence will you fetch convincing Arguments, to make them yield to you this weighty point? There is no ſuch Compendious Abridgment of them any where, that I know of, as in this place of S. *John*, which furniſhes us with reaſons both many and mighty to perſwade us and others that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. You may tell them that the *Father Almighty* ſaid ſo, by voices from Heaven, in the audience of credible perſons; and that the *Word* ſaid ſo, as they may be informed of S. *Paul*, who had no reaſon greater than this to force him to leave all, and with the daily hazard of his life to follow *Jeſus*. You may alledge the teſtimony

ny of the *Holy Ghoſt*, both at his Baptiſm and afterward; the marvellous ſanctity of his Doctrine and Life; the Confeſſion he made at his bloudy Death; the Glory of his Miraculous works; his Reſurrection from the Dead; the Power of the ſame Spirit in his Apoſtles, after he was gone to Heaven; all the Miracles which were wrought long after their times, in the places where the holy Martyrs of Jeſus ſuffered; together with the wonderful ſucceſs of theſe Witneſſes, who perſwaded innumerable People in all Countries, to become the ſubjects of this crucified King, Chriſt Jeſus.

Study this place therefore, I ſay again, very well, that you may be able to oppreſs any gain-ſayer, with the great weight of thoſe reaſons, which you render of your faith. And ſtudy it likewiſe, till you feel the faith of Jeſus doing ſomething in your hearts; till that faith which hath ſo good a cauſe, have ſutable effects: that is, till it change you, as it is ever apt to do, into the nature of that cauſe from whence it flows. It comes from God; ſee that it carry you to him, and change you into his likeneſs. It relies on his Teſtimony, be ſure that it make you perfectly of his mind. It comes with the authority from the Word

of God it ſelf, and from the Holy Ghoſt, let it mightily inſpire you with devotion to him, and ſet your affections on things above, where Chriſt is now at God's right hand. It relies upon the Purity of his holy Doctrine and Life; and therefore ought to purifie our hearts, that we may behave our ſelves in all holy converſation and godlineſs. It is founded on his Bloud, on which we can never look, but it will deaden our affections to this World, and make us crucifie the fleſh, with its paſſions and luſts. It ſtands upon the power of God, and ſhould therefore make us ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might. It grows, as you ſee, upon ſundry roots, and flows from ſeveral heads; and therefore ſhould diſpoſe thoſe in whoſe hearts it is planted, to be abundant in the work of the Lord, and to bring forth much fruit: that we may be known to be indeed the Diſciples of Jeſus, whoſe faith is ſupported by ſuch numerous Witneſſes. And this now will lead me to the next thing, which S. *John* here makes to be the neceſſary conſequent of this faith; and therefore ought not to be omitted.

IV. If

IV.

If there be such great, such abundant reason to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, then there is as great a necessity lying upon us to be obedient unto him, and punctually to observe all his commands. This Faith both requires our submission and obedience to him, and also gives us power and ability to perform it. It is a meer trick of the Devil, another piece of his Sophistry, when He cannot dig up the foundation of Christianity (which I told you was his first indeavour) to hinder all superstructure upon it: by perswading Christian People, that Faith and Obedience are no necessary Companions; but that they may be good believers, and yet not keep Christ's Precepts. Some think they need not; and others, which is the same cheat in another shape, think they cannot. But I appeal to every Man's conscience if he be a believer, whether he do not perceive his heart overawed, and his will inclined to reverence and subjection, and all his powers mightily moved to tender their service; when he seriously thinks that Jesus is the Lord, to whom God the Father hath committed all Judgment, and will render to every Man

according to his works? Do you not feel this faith carrying a great authority with it? Nay, is there not an irreſiſtable energy and vertue in it, while you attend to it, preſſing you to conformity with his holy will? Who can gain-ſay this? And who can ſay then, that his Faith does not both engage and inable him to be obedient to his Saviour, if he do but mind what he believes? He never thinks of that, but it powerfully urges and conſtrains him, to yield himſelf to be a faithful Servant of Jeſus; in every thing that he declares to be the mind and will of God. Theſe uncontrollable inclinations declare to us ſo plainly the tendency and natural diſpoſition of Chriſtian Faith, that we cannot but ſee, it is ſo far from being ſeparable from obedience; that this is eſſentially included in it, and freely flows from it, if it may be but ſuffered to have its courſe, and not be croſſed in its clear intention and deſign. If you be not convinced of this by what you feel, you may learn it of S. *John*, who tells you here what the natural iſſue of our faith is, and what duty it exacts: for it is the ſcope of theſe words which I have expounded, to lay ſuch a foundation of belief, as may unavoidably inforce obedience, unleſs we forget what our belief is. He begins

gins you know this *Fifth* Chapter of his Epiſtle with this Principle, that *every one who believes Jeſus to be the Chriſt, is born of God:* and from thence infers (in that and in the ſecond Verſe) that ſuch a perſon cannot but *love God and all his Brethren:* which Love cannot be diſcerned by any thing, but *by keeping his Commandments. FOR THIS IS THE LOVE OF GOD* (ver. 3.) *THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDEMENTS.* Here is the natural fruit of Faith; This is its Progreſs, if you do not ſtop its motions. It begets in our heart a great Love; and Love, is to be Obedient; and that to all God's Commandments, which reſpect either our duty to him, or to our Neighbour. It is in vain to ſay we believe in Jeſus, if we do not heartily love God who ſent him to us. And it is in vain to pretend love to God, if we keep not his Commandments. And it is as vain to ſay we have a dutiful reſpect to his Commandments, if our neighbour have any cauſe to complain of us. *For he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen? And this Commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God, love his Brother alſo.* iv. 20, 21.

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Here now, they who have leſs underſtanding of the grounds of Faith, may make up what is wanting in their knowledge, by the heartineſs of their Devotion to God, and the unfeignedneſs of their love to all their Brethren. If they be mightily affected with what they believe, and out of an honeſt love in their hearts to his holy Precepts, be very diligent in their obedience; it will ſupply the defect that is in their underſtanding of the Reaſons why they believe in Jeſus. For if a ſmall argument in a weak and dull underſtanding, does the ſame work with a ſtrong argument in a quick and piercing, where lies the difference; but only that the One can ſerve Religion more with his mind and diſcourſe, the other meerly with his good will and his pious life? But will any man preſume to be ſo impious, as to imploy his will to find out ways to excuſe his Obedience to him, whom he acknowledges for his Lord? He ſhould rather conſider ſeriouſly how reaſonable and how neceſſary it is, that he who knows ſo well what Jeſus is, and how *he came*, ſhould above all other Men do him the moſt faithful and zealous ſervice. For if we do but obſerve how many arguments here are to perſwade

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us to this Faith in Jeſus, with what Authority he was ſent, and with what power he came to us; we ſhall think it was for ſome very great work: and feel it impoſſible, while we are ſenſible of this, not to do what he requires, though now perhaps it ſeem impoſſible to be done. He is not come of himſelf; but hath the mark and ſtamp of the Supreme Lord upon him. He evidently ſhows that he hath a Commiſſion from God; and brings (as I may ſay) the Broad-ſeal of Heaven with him, to warrant what he demands, though it be never ſo great a tribute of Obedience. Here are *Witneſſes* to him above all exception; and they all bid us behave our ſelves ſubmiſſively towards him, and not deny to do any thing that he would have us. *Him hath God the Father ſealed*, as he tells us, vi. Joh. 27. and by his Voice from Heaven commands us to *HEAR HIM*. Which was as if he had ſaid, If you will believe him that cannot lye, then Jeſus is the TRUTH: to every word of whoſe mouth we ought to hearken; that is, faithfully obey and obſerve. For as God is ſaid to hear us, when he grants our deſires; ſo we hear him or his Son, when we fulfill his pleaſure. The WORD likewiſe (2.) when he appeared to S. *Paul*, made him

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an Apoſtle, *for obedience to the faith among all Nations*, i. Rom. 5. And told him expreſly that he appeared to him for this end, that he might ſend him to the Gentiles, *to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* xxvi. Act. 16, 18. The HOLY GHOST likewiſe (3.) is a Witneſs of this, which was *given to thoſe that obeyed him.* v. Act. 32. But lookt upon all wickedneſs as an high affront to it; at which it was *grieved*, and by which it was *quenched*; nay, forced to *depart*, as not induring to dwell in the ſame Houſe with filthineſs and impurity. Unto which the *Water* (4.) or the Holy life and purity of our Saviour in all his actions as well as his Doctrine, was directly oppoſite. And tells us that we muſt be obedient, if there were no other reaſon for it but this alone, that the Son of God himſelf was ſo in every thing. Did God exact obedience of him, that he might demand none of us? Will he ſet us free from that duty and ſervice, to which his dearly beloved Son was ſtrictly tyed? He fulfilled all righteouſneſs, and obſerved even that Law of Ceremonies, to which we have no obligation: And do we think to be hereby excuſed from paying all thoſe reſpects which are naturally due from Creatures

tures to the author of their being, and which we cannot but owe to thoſe who are of the ſame kind with us? What is it that hath ſo perverted the underſtanding of Chriſtian People, as to poſſeſs them with apprehenſions quite contrary to common reaſon? What ailes us that we cannot ſee the end of Chriſt's coming, nay, that we overlook the plain words of his holy Scriptures, which tell us, that he *left us an example*, and expects that we ſhould *follow* it, and be *made conformable* to him, and be *renewed after his image*, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs; *without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord?* This the Bloud (5.) ſpeaks ſtill more effectually. For he would dye rather than diſobey God. *He became obedient to death, even the death of the Croſs*, ii. Philip. 8. which was the reaſon why God ſo highly exalted him, and gave him that Name which he hath above every Name. There was no other way whereby he could aſcend up into Glory: And therefore it is madneſs for us to think to leap up thither, and skip over the holy life of Jeſus. Eſpecially ſince he declares, that his Bloud was ſhed (to which perhaps we truſt for redemption, though we remain in our impurities) *that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himſelf*

ſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works. ii. Tit. 14. To the doing of which (6.) he hath given us the *Spirit* for our helper. Every Miracle that it wrought (to ſay nothing but what is within the verge of theſe words) bids us conſider what a Potent Lord we ſerve: for whom nothing is too hard. By a Thouſand Wonders, by more miraculous works than we could have had time to read, ſhould they have been all written, did he awake the ſleepy World: commanding them to ariſe, and go about his work; and he would be with them, his Power, which nothing can withſtand, ſhould aid and ſuccour them. The obedience, me thinks, which the Winds and the Sea, and the Fiſhes, and the Graves, and the Devils themſelves paid him, call upon us and tell us both what we ought to do, and what aſſiſtance we may expect from the power of his might to make us obedient to his Faith. Who can reſiſt the joynt importunity of ſo many Witneſſes? who can hear all theſe tell us, that *the Son of God is come*, by whom we muſt be governed, and yet be ſo ſenſeleſly obſtinate, as to ſay, *We will not have this man to rule over us?* O deaf ears! O hearts harder than the nether Milſtone! which will not let ſuch loud voices ſink into them; ſuch mighty argu-

arguments penetrate and mollifie them, into compliance with him! What can reduce ſuch Souls and bring them under any government, who will not be reclaimed by the authority of the Son of God? I may *call Heaven and Earth to Witneſs*, againſt ſuch obdurate hearts. The Father, Word and Holy Ghoſt, theſe are Witneſſes in Heaven, that teſtifie it is our duty and intereſt too to ſubmit our ſelves unto him. The Water, Bloud, and the Spirit, they are Witneſſes on Earth, which agree together to perſwade us to take his eaſie Yoke upon us. Can neither Heaven nor Earth prevail with us? Is not *God the Father* Almighty great enough to lay his commands upon us? Is the *WORD* of God of leſs credit, than the common vogue and opinion of the World, with us? Cannot the *Holy Ghoſt* be believed concerning the place from whence it comes, when it ſays that no unclean thing ſhall enter in thither? Do we think his *holy life* to be a troubleſome folly? and deſpiſe his *bloud*? and reſiſt his *ſpirit*? and receive all the grace of God in vain? *Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth*; after God had ſent many of his Servants who were diſregarded, He laſt of all ſent his Son into the World, ſaying, ſurely *they will reverence my Son*; but they have rebelled againſt him.

I might call for Hell it ſelf to witneſs againſt ſuch perverſe and diſloyal Creatures. The Devils will not fail to accuſe ſuch men hereafter: for *they believe and tremble*; they acknowledge this great Truth, that *Jeſus is the Holy one of God* (iv. *Luke* 34.) which is the very ſame that *Jeſus* himſelf ſaid, when he tells us *the Father hath ſanctified him* (*i. e.* made him his holy One) *and ſent him into the world*, x. *John* 36. And that is more, I doubt, than a great many irreligious ſpirits will confeſs; in their works, I am ſure, the moſt of the Chriſtian world utterly deny it. Do you think the Devils who made that confeſſion would have diſobeyed him, if they might have taken our place, and had his Salvation offered to them? Would they not have ſhaken off their chains, and taken upon them his yoke, had they received ſuch gracious invitations as he hath made to us? Let us not be worſe than they, I beſeech you, by caſting away that hope, which was never given them; and ſlighting ſuch tenders of mercy which are peculiarly directed to the children of men. But let us rather admire, adore and magnifie this amazing love of God, who ſent his Son ſo kindly to

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ſpeak to ſuch wretches as we are. And let us ſhow that we are ſenſible of his love, by hearkening to his voice, and readily ſubmitting our ſelves with all dutiful, nay joyful affection to his commands. *See*, I beſeech you again, *that you refuſe not him that ſpeaketh: for if they eſcaped not who refuſed him that ſpake on Earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven.* Let all his Laws be held moſt ſacred, and be devoutly reverenced and obſerved. Know that this is *your wiſdom and underſtanding*; nay, remember that it is *your life. And therefore keep your Souls diligently, leſt you forget thoſe things which you have heard, and leſt they depart from your hearts all the days of your life.* Chuſe death rather than the life of the *unrighteous, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners, who*, he hath pronounced, *ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Do you not remember how obſervant the children of *Jonadab* the ſon of *Rechab* were of their Fathers Commandment; and how they could not be tempted, no not by a Propher, to contradict it? xxxv. *Jer. 6.* What Arguments I pray you had they (ſo reaſonable and moving as thoſe which urge us) for this in-

junction? Might they not have ſlipt many ways, with better colour than we can do, from this obligation? Did there want plauſible pretences to plead their excuſe, if they had abſolved themſelves and not obſerved it? Might they not have ſaid that every Creature of God was good, and none to be refuſed? That their ſtomachs ſometimes required a little Wine, and that it was reaſonable to give them ſatisfaction? That their Father had gone beyond his Authority, and taken away the juſt liberty which God had left them? That they were reſtrained enough by the Divine Laws, and that there needed no more of his making? O the inſenſibleneſs and ingratitude of Chriſtian people, that can think of theſe mens reverence to ſo ſevere and hard a command of their Father, and be leſs obedient to their moſt gracious Lord! What a forehead hath that man who dares venture to break any of his Precepts, when he hath ſo many Reaſons to believe that he hath laid none upon us, but thoſe which are the very mind and will of God; and are ſuch a neceſſary indiſpenſable burden, that unleſs we carry them we cannot be ſaved? There is nothing that can be pretended, why we ſhould not ſtrictly tye our ſelves to his will.

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Not only the love, which engaged the *Rechabites*, enforces our obedience, but infinitely more reaſon than there was in their Fathers will and pleaſure; for we are aſſured that *Jeſus* is the Son of God. He could not but have a perfect underſtanding of what was fit and convenient for us. If there had been any other way more eaſie to Heaven, than this he hath ſet before us, we cannot but think He would have revealed it unto us. If there were any licenſe that could be granted us, to diſpenſe with our obedience, He was not ſo unkind as to conceal it: much leſs would he have taken it upon his death, that none will be allowed. For he declared openly in his Sermons, that he will not only take no knowledge of thoſe who work iniquity, but bid them depart from him, whatſoever relation they pretend to him. And by his Bloud he aſſures us that he preached nothing but the undoubted Truth of God. What is it then, that makes men ſtill continue, either to ſlight all that he ſays, or to give him the lye? It is no better, if we preſume to believe that we ſhall ſhift well enough in another world, though we do what we liſt while we are here. It is to contradict the voice of the Father, of the Word, and of the Holy Ghoſt. It is to

oppoſe the Doctrine, the Life, the Sufferings, the Power and Spirit of the Lord *Jeſus*, who all tell us that we muſt be holy and unblameable before him in love, if we hope to be accepted with him. They that live wickedly and yet hope well, do in effect ſay that He is a Lyar, and that there is no ſuch neceſſity of holineſs, without which, he ſays, no man ſhall ſee the Lord. Or elſe they deſpiſe that bleſſed ſight, which is as bad, and neither dread his diſpleaſure, nor deſire his favour. If they be believers, then they reproach him by their wicked lives, as if he were ſtill dead, and could do no more to make his diſciples better, or to reward and puniſh their good or bad behaviour, than *Mahomet* can, or any other impoſtor. All the Oaths, curſes and blaſphemies which we hear out of Chriſtian mouths, are as ſo many ſpears to pierce our Saviour again, becauſe they ſorely wound his Religion, and tend to the deſtruction of his Kingdom and Government. All the laſciviouſneſs, wantonneſs, and filthy debaucheries that are among us, are a kind of crucifying *Jeſus* afreſh; they are a ſcoff and mock at his Croſs, as a ridiculous piece of folly. They reproach him as if he were an ideot, that did not underſtand pleaſure,

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but would put himſelf to unneceſſary pain and trouble. Nor can we put a much better interpretation upon mens eager purſuit of riches and honours, in unjuſt, uncharitable and irreligious ways, which charges him with great ignorance, to ſay no worſe, who took the quite contrary courſe to happineſs. As for all thoſe who gibe at his Religion, and make themſelves ſport with the Hiſtory of his Birth and of his Sufferings, they come under another rank, being open and profeſſed Enemies to his Majeſty. They do as much as in them lies to hang him upon the Gibbet again, and expoſe him to the ſcorn of the world. They juſtifie the *Jews* in their calumnies and blaſphemies, and take part with *Judas*, or rather are worſe than He, who was tempted only by his covetouſneſs to betray him. And better it had been for theſe men, if they never had been born. It were better for them that a milſtone were hang'd about their neck, and they were caſt into the Sea, or that they had been hang'd themſelves on a Gallows as high as that of *Haman*, than that they ſhould live thus to expoſe the Saviour of the world to ſhame. For though he will not die and riſe again to convince them, yet he will come and appear again to condemn them. *He*

will be revealed from Heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance of all them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus *Chriſt: who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,* 2 *Theſſ.* i. 8, 9. Let us therefore take good heed to our ſelves, that we be neither faithleſs, nor unfaithful to our belief. But let us ſettle ſuch an unmoveable faith in our Souls, upon theſe ſtrong foundations which God hath laid for it, and let us ſo ſtir it up by new reflections every day on what we believe, that we may have our portion among thoſe who are ſpoken of in the next words, *ver.* 10. *When he ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.*

But ſome perhaps will pretend, that there are ſo many things to hinder every man from doing his duty, that though he believe never ſo well, and think obedience never ſo neceſſary, yet he ſhall never be able to comply with the commands of the Lord *Jeſus*, but muſt be forced to break them, even after he hath reſolved the contrary. To this S. *John* hath here alſo taken care to give us an anſwer, when he tells us that ſuch is the power of Chriſtian

ſtian Faith, that by it we OVERCOME THE WORLD, *ver.* 4, 5. *For whatſoever is born of God, OVERCOMETH THE WORLD: and this is the victory that OVERCOMETH THE WORLD, even our faith. Who is he that OVERCOMETH THE WORLD, but he that believeth that* Jeſus *is the Son of God.*

V.

That is the next thing therefore which I am to give a brief account of, that our Lord expects (which he would not do, if he did not endue us with ſufficient ſtrength) that in the vertue of this Belief, we ſhould get the better of all temptations which ſtand in the way of our duty, and would hinder us from the performance of it. By the WORLD, with which we are to conflict till we overcome, is partly underſtood *wicked men*, xv. *John* 18. partly the *tribulations* and miſeries we may here endure by their and other means, xvi. *Joh.* 33. and partly the *allurements* and enticing enjoyments, wherewith all our ſenſes are entertained, 1 *John* ii. 15, 16. All theſe oppoſe us, and ſet themſelves againſt us, either by diſcouraging or elſe flattering us from our known duty. It is hard to be the

object of hatred, contempt or ſcorn; harder to endure alſo poverty, hunger, reſtraint, and ſuch torments as the Apoſtles and other bleſſed Martyrs ſuffered; and perhaps hardeſt of all to reſiſt the perſwaſions of pleaſure, which proſperity and wordly Glory bring along with them. What muſt a Believer do, when he is thus beſet? Muſt he be content to yield himſelf too weak to deal with theſe enemies? Muſt he let the WORLD have the day, and declare that it was impoſſible to ſtand againſt its mighty forces? Or will it be ſufficient to enter into a conflict with them, if it be but to ſay that he was not falſe or cowardly, though he ſuffer himſelf to be over-powred by them? No, the Faith of *Jeſus* is ſtronger than ſo, if it be deeply rooted in our hearts: and will enable us to maſter all theſe, which ſeem to be no equal match for us. Their ſtrength lies only in the weakneſs of our Faith. If we *ſtand faſt*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *in the faith grounded and ſetled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Goſpel*, they will loſe their force and flee before us, and leave us victorious. Theſe ſix *Witneſſes* are ſuch Champions, if I may ſo call them, that the Faith which is led by them, and firmly relies upon them, cannot come off baſely, but muſt needs be triumphant.

1. As for the hatred of men and their deſpiſal, alas! what a contemptible thing does it ſeem? how does it ſneak into nothing, when we look up unto *Jeſus*, and remember that He was the Son of God, and yet endured it (as he tells his Apoſtles, xv. *John* 18.) and thought himſelf never the leſs glorious? It cannot be help'd but we muſt be ſcorned ſometime or other, if we will follow him; unleſs we could perſwade all men to bear us company. But this is our comfort and encouragement, that this is the way to glory, and that now we are conformed to our Saviour, who by the ſhame of the Croſs, hath got himſelf immortal honour; and that the *Father* at preſent approves us, the *Word* delights in us, the *Spirit* of God and of Glory reſts upon us; all theſe Heavenly Witneſſes eſteem and love us, and are pleaſed to ſee us behave our ſelves worthily as *Jeſus* did.

2. And if from hence we paſs through many tribulations, and encounter ſuch troubles and hardſhips as we are all deſirous to avoid, they will not be able to affright or daunt him who hath this faith thus planted in his heart; *For greater is*

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He that is in us, than he that is in the WORLD. Did not the ancient Worthies and great Warriers againſt the WORLD, wade through very great difficulties in the ſtrength of a Faith which was much weaker than this of ours? How did all thoſe brave men whom you read of, *Hebr.* xi. *obtain a good report*, but *through faith*, when it had not received this promiſe? *ver.* 39. Surely, we that underſtand more than they did, we who *know the Son of God is come*, not only by *WATER*, but by *BLOUD*; and who know that Eternal life is in him, and have received the Holy Ghoſt, and are made partakers of ſuch glorious Revelations in the Goſpel of his grace, and who know the certainty of thoſe things wherein we are inſtructed; we, I ſay, cannot but take the courage in the power of ſuch a Faith to behave our ſelves valiantly, and with Chriſtian reſolution, in ſuch like ſtraits and dangers as made their fidelity ſo remarkable. Read what S. *Peter* ſays to encourage us, 1 iii. 14, 15. *But if you ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. But ſanctifie the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an anſwer to every man that asketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you.*

you. As if he ſhould have ſaid, It may ſeem a ſtrange folly to ſuffer ſo much as you do, and you may begin to be ſtartled at the troubles which befall you; but bear a reverend regard towards God who hath called you to this ſtate of Chriſtianity, do but ſtand in awe of his Authority who hath bid you hear, that is obey, Jeſus whatſoever it coſt you; and do but tell every Man what reaſon you have for what you do and ſuffer, and what hope you have in him upon this account: And then they will either ceaſe to trouble you, or you will ceaſe to be troubled for what they make you ſuffer. Now what are the reaſons of our Chriſtian hope and patience, but theſe which we are here treating of? If we alledge theſe to our ſelves or to others, it will ſoon appear that we are no fools in expoſing our ſelves to any dangers for righteouſneſs ſake. The *Father* hath bidden us be true to it, ſo hath the *Word* and ſo hath the *Holy Ghoſt*: every one of the other three alſo call upon us to be couragious; for it is a worthy cauſe wherein we are ingaged, and we ſhall not loſe our reward. Here are reaſons enough; and they are ſtronger than all their adverſaries. The World hath nothing to oppoſe ſo weighty as theſe Witneſſes; every one of which I might

might ſhow you (if it would not prove too tedious) lay an obligation on us not to be moved from our ſtedfaſtneſs, but to take up our Croſs and to follow Jeſus. And I the rather paſs by theſe, becauſe I think they are generally of leſs force than the other part of the *WORLD*, which uſes to aſſault Mankind more dangerouſly.

3. I mean the alluring and inticing enjoyments here below, which we are too prone to comply withall. They are of an inveigling and inſinuating nature, and may get admittance by their ſoft violence; when the other cannot prevail by more rough oppoſition. We are apt to fortifie our ſelves againſt evil things, and are many times angry they ſhould attempt to overmaſter us; but to the good things of the *WORLD* we lye naked and open, and there is a treacherous party within that is willing they ſhould enter, nay, ready to open the doors to them. And they are of three ſorts, as the forenamed place in this Epiſtle tells us, *the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life*, ii. 16. All that the *WORLD* contains in it, for the captivating of an earthly Mans affections, and ſatisfying his deſires is comprehended under one of theſe three Names. For the underſtand-

derſtanding of which you muſt know, that the *Hebrews* have a manner of ſpeech which expreſſes the *Object* by the *Act*: and the cleareſt interpretation of theſe words is grounded on that uſe of theirs. So that by *LUST* we are to underſtand all thoſe things that gratifie ſome appetite of pleaſure, wealth, or greatneſs; and by *FLESH* (which is not here, as it is ſometimes a general word) it is moſt agreeable to underſtand the lower and duller ſenſes which lye moſt in the fleſh, and are affected with things that have ſome groſneſs in them. And then the whole phraſe, *LUST OF THE FLESH*, that ſort of things which give content to the touch, the taſte and ſmell; ſuch as are meat, and drink and perfumes, and other voluptuous enjoyments, which, I need not name but, are ſometimes particularly called *FLESH*. And then by the *LUST OF THE EYES*, we are to underſtand ſuch things, as belong to the higher and more refined ſenſe of ſeeing, *viz.* Gold and Silver, precious Stones and Jewels, Lordſhips and large poſſeſſions, noble Houſes and rich Furniture, beautiful Pictures and fair Gardens, fine clothes and coſtly attire; all that is comprehended under the name of *Riches*, which as *Solomon* obſerves, yields only this

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ſatisfaction to the owner, that *he beholdeth them with his eye.* There is little in theſe things but what is all lodged in this ſenſe; and therefore they are called the *luſt of the eye,* becauſe it loves to look upon them, and when that is done, they can do more for him. Only they may prefer a man to that which he calls the *PRIDE OF LIFE*; which ſignifies all thoſe things that flatter and pleaſe the inward ſenſe, our fancy or imagination. Such as are great offices and places of Dignity, noble Titles, all the Honour and Glory of the World, together with the eſteem, at leaſt the applauſe and commendation of men, which is wont to follow them.

One or more of theſe *three* ſorts of things every man naturally hunts after, and his deſires prick him forward in its purſuit. For theſe are mens ſtudy and labour; with theſe the Devil baits his hooks, to catch Souls, and they who do not bite at one will be nibling at another. They that are not tempted by the firſt to gluttony and drunkenneſs, fornication and ſuch like filthineſs, feel the ſecond perhaps incline them to covetouſneſs and the ſordid love of Money, with a thirſt and greedineſs of another kind. Or if they can eſcape and deſpiſe theſe,

theſe, they may notwithſtanding be in danger to be carried away with the humor of prodigality, and affectation of vain-glory, or ambition of Dignities; which is attended with emulation, envy and other dangerous Vices. As the *African* Beaſt which ſome write of, is caught with Muſick, and ſuffers its feet to be fettered while it liſtens to the Leſſons that are play'd to it: So do the generality of Mankind let their Souls be inſnared and led into a miſerable captivity, by the inchanting voice of pleaſure, riches, or glory. Whilſt they hearken to the bewitching melody which ſome of theſe court them withall, they are taken in the mighty Hunter's net, and become a prey to him that lurks for Souls, and ſeek whom he may devour. And it has not been in the power of the wiſeſt Charmers that ever were in the World, to open the eares of the moſt of men, and to convey the ſenſe of better things into them. All the Philoſophy and Learning that was ſo famous in former Ages, could never obtain ſuch numerous chearful and obedient Auditors, as the Syren Songs, which theſe three ſing in Mens eares, have always found. When the World therefore by that wiſdome knew not God, *it pleaſed God*, ſays S. *Paul* (1 Cor. i. 21.)

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by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe. The faith of Chriſt directs and diſpoſes us to avoid all thoſe dangerous rocks on which they ſplit themſelves who liſten to thoſe deceitful Songs. Now that the Son of God is come, He pulls our feet out of the net; and by his far more powerful charms ſo ſtops our ears to thoſe inchantments, that there is no entrance for them any more. It ſeemed a fooliſh thing indeed to the World, to believe that the crucified Jeſus was the Son of God; but where this ſimple faith prevailed it did more, than all the wiſdome of the World was able to effect before. For it gave them a new underſtanding and ſaved them from periſhing; by making them account it the greateſt pleaſure and glory and treaſures to follow Jeſus, and do the will of God, as he did. *The World*, they ſaw, *paſſeth away and the luſt thereof* (if they do not leave us, we muſt at laſt leave them) *but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever.* So thoſe *three* Heavenly witneſſes, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, aſſure us: whoſe voice as it is moſt ſweet and melodious, ſo it is moſt powerful to diſinchant us, and to preſerve thoſe who receive their teſtimony, from all the bewitching temptations of thoſe other *three*, the *luſt of the fleſh*,

fleſh, the *luſt of the eye* and *the pride of life*. Nay, here are two *Threes* of infinitely greater vertue and efficacy to prevail with us, than all that the *WORLD'S Trinity* can offer to us, if we will but open our ears, and diligently liſten to their voice.

And how can we chooſe but liſten when the *Father* of Heaven calls to us ſo graciouſly, when the *Word* opens his ſecrets to us, and the *Holy-Ghoſt* proclaims ſuch an abundant love of God towards us: The *Water*, the *Bloud*, the *Spirit*, they alſo with one conſent conſpire with thoſe, and all together ſing this *New Song*, *THE SON OF GOD IS COME*, *the Son of God is come*. This one note of theirs more raviſhes, than all the pleaſures and ſatisfactions which the *WORLD* infatuates its followers withall. Heaven and Earth cannot ſpeak any thing more moving in our ears than this, which again and again ſalutes them with new joy. For what would you have them ſay? would it pleaſe you to hear that Infinite Goodneſs loves us, that the Heavens ſtand open to us, and ſhow us their glory, that God is willing to receive us up thither, that he will make us Heirs of a Kingdom, equal with the Angels, to hear their Songs, and joyn with that Celeſtial Quire? Be-

hold! they are all included in this one ſentence, THE SON OF GOD IS COME. GOD HATH GIVEN US HIS SON. This is the ſweeteſt Aire that can touch our eares: this we can never be weary to hear: this ſtrikes our ſouls, if we underſtand it, ſo gratefully, that we cannot but ſay, let us hear that again. And therefore after the Father, the Word, and the Holy-Ghoſt have bleſt our ears with this *joyful ſound*; here are *three* more that take it up, and repeat it to us with the ſtrongeſt aſſurances, that we hear the Voice of God himſelf. And the oftner we liſten to them and lend them our attention (the more frequently, I mean, we think upon the reaſons we have to believe in Jeſus) the more deaf ſhall we grow to all the ſinful allurements of this World, how inviting ſoever before they have been. For my part, I think there is more real ſatisfaction in the very underſtanding of this one place of Holy Scripture, than in all the delights of worldly men. What is there, I beſeech you conſider, in all their ſenſualities comparable to the rational guſt of what is contained in that one voice of the Father, THIS IS MY WELL BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED? What Riches are there to be equalled with this

this treaſure of Divine knowledge, that God hath beſtowed his own Son upon us? What honour like to this, to be preferred to be the Friends, yea the Sons of God? Can you hear any thing ſo delicious as that voice of the WORD, *To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, in the midſt of the Paradiſe of God?* ii. Rev. 7. Were there ever any Jewels ſo precious, as the ineſtimable gifts, wherewithall the *Holy Ghoſt* hath inriched the Church? what Muſick is there fit to bear a part, with thoſe *Hymns, and Pſalms, and ſpiritual Songs*, that it inſpired the hearts of Chriſtians withall? Doth it not even raviſh the heart of a pious man to think of them, though he do not hear the like in theſe days? What is there in all the broken Ciſterns of this World, that taſtes like the *Rivers of living Water*, that Jeſus hath poured out unto us? What peace does it ſpeak to us, like that which by the *Bloud* of Jeſus is purchaſed for us? Or what power is there in any of this Worlds temptation, that can ſtand before the voice of that SPIRIT which ſays *COME, and whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely?* xxii. Rev. 17. Certainly, in the ſtrength of ſuch a faith ſo fortified, ſo incouraged by all theſe *Witneſſes*, we may eaſily tread the WORLD

under our feet, and make its moſt mighty temptations crouch to us; whereas now, for want of this ſolid faith we ſhamefully bow down to it and worſhip it. Let but any man remember when he reads theſe words, *LOVE NOT THE WORLD; for all that is in the WORLD, the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the World. And the world paſſeth away and the luſt thereof; but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever.* Or when he reads any other leſſon in the holy Books, let him but remember, that thus ſays the *Father* of all, and thus ſays his WORD, and this is the voice of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and of all the reſt of the Witneſſes, who teſtifie that *Jeſus* who teaches theſe things is the *Son of God*; and then he will never be perſwaded to yield to the faireſt thing that ever eye beheld, or the ſweeteſt thing the mouth can taſte, or the greateſt pleaſure any other ſenſe is capable to feel, if it muſt be enjoyed by the breaking of any of theſe commandments. No, he will *yield himſelf unto God*, (vi. *Rom.* 13.) and lay himſelf at the feet of his *WORD*, and ſubmit to the dictates and ſentence of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and follow the example of Chriſt's *purity*, and be made conformable

conformable to his *Death*, and be led by his *Spirit*, and think it an honour to be conquered by ſuch Defendants of the cauſe of *Jeſus*. O how hateful would every ſin be to us, though it dreſs up it ſelf never ſo beautifully, and court us with never ſuch promiſes of pleaſure or greatneſs, did we but at the ſame time reflect upon theſe Witneſſes and remember what they have teſtified to us! How ſhould we deſire it? How paſſionately ſhould we tear all its gaudy dreſſes in pieces? How heartily ſhould we deſpiſe all its temptations, which would have us ſlight all theſe great *Witneſſes*, who tell us the *Son of God is come*, and that he is come for this purpoſe, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil? 1 *John* iii. 8. Every unlawful enjoyment would look like a manifeſt jeer to all theſe, and as if a man ſhould ſay to them, Why do you trouble your ſelves, this is our Darling, our God, and all your perſwaſions ſhall not prevail with us to let it go. It would appear a contempt of God; a laughing of his WORD to ſcorn, who came upon ſo needleſs, at leaſt fruitleſs an errand; a manifeſt challenge to the *Holy Ghoſt*, who by every ſin is boldly oppoſed. And what heart can endure to think of being guilty of ſuch madneſs?

which throws dirt into this *pure Water*, I mean the life of Chriſt, and treads his *Bloud* under feet, and miſcalls the *Spirit* of grace, as if it were not *the Truth*, but had deceived the world when it told them, that *this is the will of God, even our ſanctification. For God* (ſays S. *Paul*) *hath not called us unto uncleanneſs, but unto holineſs. He therefore that deſpiſeth, deſpiſeth not Man but God, who hath alſo given unto us his holy SPIRIT*, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 3, 7, 8.

To conclude this, you know what is commonly ſaid, and it is a certain truth, of thoſe who are bit with a kind of Spider in *Italy*, which they call a *Tarantula*, that there is no way to cure them of their pleaſant frenzy, but by ſuch Muſick as is appropriate to the motions which their poiſon makes in the brain of him, into whom it is infuſed. Let this be an Emblem of the truth I have now delivered; that the old Serpent having envenomed mens Souls, poiſoned their principles, perverted their affections, and depraved their lives; there is nothing of efficacy ſufficient to recover them, but only ſuch charms as theſe, which by this *ſix ſtringed* Inſtrument, as I may call it, God hath provided for our Cure. And this will certainly do

it,

it, by infuſing the Faith of *Jeſus* into us, which is the victory whereby we overcome the WORLD. Do but hearken diligently to theſe Witneſſes, do but mind their ſweet conſent, their harmony and agreement in the teſtimony they give to this great truth, that *Jeſus* our Maſter is the Son of God; and there is no venome ſo deadly which this Faith will not expel, no love to the WORLD ſo ſtrong which it will not vanquiſh and ſubdue. It will recover us to our ſelves, and make nothing ſeem ſo ridiculous as the folly and frantickneſs of worldly men; yet it will advance us to a Divine and Heavenly ſpirit, ſo that we ſhall not be apt to receive ſuch peſtilent infuſions any more, but *keep our ſelves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life.*

VI.

For I muſt add now, in the laſt place, that this Faith is ſo far from being unable to conquer all temptations which would hinder us from obeying our Saviour's commands, that it gives us power and ſtrength to do our duty *with chearfulneſs.* So S. *John* here tells us, when he adds to what he ſays of the keeping of his Com-

mandments, that HIS COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT GRIEVOUS. For (as *Oecumenius* well gloſſes) what load is it for a man to love his Brother? What great burden is it to viſit him if he be in priſon? God doth not command thee to deliver him, but only to viſit him. He doth not bid thee knock off his chains, but ſee how he bears them. Nor doth he bid thee cure a ſick man, but only comfort and relieve him. Nor provide dainties for a poor man, but only feed him; nor give rich apparel to the naked, but only cloath them. And ſo we may conclude of the reſt, that it is rather an eaſe than a burden to be ſober and chaſte in all enjoyments of pleaſure; to be content with a ſmall portion of thoſe things, which others deſire with a greedy and ravenous eye; to bear with that patiently which we cannot remedy; to be careful for nothing, but in every thing to make known our requeſts to God with Prayer and Thankſgiving; to be meek and peaceable amongſt contentious people; to forgive thoſe that injure us; to envy no man's greatneſs; and with an humble modeſty, to ſatisfie our ſelves though we be not equal to them. Theſe and ſuch like qualities wherewith *Jeſus* would inveſt us, are in themſelves moſt deſirable;

deſirable; and, though richer than cloath of Gold, are like our ordinary garments, which are no load to thoſe that wear them. But they are the leſs grievous to thoſe that believe in *Jeſus*; who are endued with power from above, by receiving the teſtimony of ſo many Divine Witneſſes, who aſſure them they are in the way of God, in the company of his Son, under the conduct of the Holy Ghoſt, in the direct rode to that glorious place where *Jeſus* is; and therefore why ſhould not they rejoyce and be exceeding glad to find themſelves thus happy? That load which to a ſick man ſeems intolerable, if it be laid on the neck of one in health is ſo eaſie, that he can run away with it with pleaſure. And ſo it is in the caſe of keeping God's Commandments, which to a man that has ſpoil'd his Soul by following divers luſts, are ſo far from being eaſie, that he thinks them inſupportable and impoſſible to be complied withall; but when he has recovered himſelf by the faith of Chriſt, and hath received the ſupply of theſe new and Heavenly principles, they become to the very ſame man, not only tolerable, but ſweet and delightful. This faith would not be pleaſed to be excuſed from this burden; it would take it ill not to draw in the ſame

Yoke

Yoke with *Jeſus*; it naturally makes us of his Spirit, who ſaid, *I delight to do thy will, O God.* For what is it that we believe? Is it not that *Jeſus is the Son of God*; his well-beloved Son? And ſhall we complain of that work, which was the buſineſs and the delight of God's beſt beloved, when he was in the world? It would be too grievous an accuſation of God, to think that after he had filled the Earth with joy and gladneſs for the coming of his Son, He ſhould inſtantly quench it all, and turn it into heavineſs, by a number of ſuch ſevere and intolerable Commandments, as no man can look upon and not be melancholy. And what are the grounds of our belief? Are they not all that Heaven and Earth can afford us? Are we not as ſure as God can make us? Phy! for ſhame then, what a reproach is it, that any man ſhould ſigh and groan, look ſour and ſad, as if he had all the burden of Heaven and Earth to carry, when he has rather the aid and aſſiſtance of both to ſupport and ſtrengthen him under an eaſie load?

Certain it is, that according to our knowledge and underſtanding, ſo will be our Faith: and according to our faith, ſo will be our ſtrength. Now how can there be

be greater evidence and ſtrength of Reaſon to induce us to believe than theſe *ſix Witneſſes* have given us? They fully ſatisfie our underſtandings; they make it completely rational to acknowledge *Jeſus* to be the Son of God. And therefore why ſhould not this Faith, thus begot and ſtanding on ſuch ſure foundations, give us a very great ſtrength, courage, chearfulneſs and ſpirit; making difficult things become eaſie, harſh things become ſweet, and the moſt tedious ſtay in this world comfortable, by preſenting us, and that ſo ſtrongly, with the power and glory of the Lord *Jeſus?* This Faith you ſee reſts upon theſe ſix Columns, upon theſe two rows of Pillars (as I may ſo ſpeak) on the one ſide ſtands the teſtimony of the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST; on the other ſide, the teſtimony of the WATER, the BLOUD, and the SPIRIT: and therefore nothing will be too great a burden to lay upon it; it will ſupport any weight, and never let us groan, much leſs break under its load. *All things are EASY* as well as *POSSIBLE to him that believeth.*

It is the obſervation of *Seneca*, I remember, that nothing is ſo hard but the mind of man can maſter it, and make it familiar, by conſtant thoughts and pains about it.

There

There are no motions ſo natural, but ſome by labour have reſtrained them, and made the forbearance of them eaſie: and none again ſo unnatural but by the like daily practice and attention they have brought themſelves to the delightful uſe of them. As ſome have kept long and tedious faſts, others perpetual ſilence, and have lived out of the company of all mankind, which are examples of the former kind. And we ſee inſtances of the latter, in thoſe who learn to walk and dance upon ropes, to work with their feet, and to dive into the exceſſive depths of the Sea. And can the mind of man alone, when it buckles it ſelf to the buſineſs, be able to perform ſuch difficult things with eaſe and ſatisfaction; and yet remain utterly unable to take any contentment in obedience to Chriſt's Precepts, though it be exalted by faith, and a faith ſo ſtrong, as theſe ſix Witneſſes, if we attend, will work in us? May things to which nature is not inclined be accompliſhed at laſt, and become habitual, and we think God too ſevere to expect from us thoſe duties which are moſt agreeable to our natures, as all the actions of vertue are? And ſhall a weaker power maſter thoſe hard and unnatural tasks, and a power ſtronger than all others ſink under the burden

burden of the moſt reaſonable, and, in themſelves, moſt natural Commandments? It cannot but put a conſidering perſon into a little indignation, to hear men complain of the uneaſineſs of Chriſt's yoke, when they lay more troubleſome and unmerciful burdens upon themſelves, without any murmuring. How can one ſee men, without ſome impatience, contend with ſwift horſes, and endeavour to out-run them, and yet cry out of the tedioufneſs of the race of God's Commandments? Shall any man perſwade us, that it is not ſo eaſie to learn the way of God's teſtimonies, as it is to work with his feet, or go upon his hands? Shall they make us believe it is ſo hard a buſineſs to bend their wills to God's, when we ſee their bodies made as ſupple as wax, that they may wreath them about at pleaſure? Can it be half ſo troubleſome to lay a bridle on our tongues, as it is never to ſpeak at all? O man! where is thy Reaſon, what is become of thy Soul, that thou groaneſt in the ſervice of God, and canſt make a ſport of far more grievous things? Thy own mind might teach thee better, if thou wouldſt but hearken to its inſtructions; and therefore what may not God expect from the Faith I am ſpeaking of, which

which is a far more powerful Principle, and hath made Men *ſtop the mouths of Lions, quench the violence of Fire, indure torture and not accept deliverance,* when it was much weaker than our faith need now be? I will ingage that if a man do but uſe himſelf frequently to ponder theſe words of S. *John,* and perſwade himſelf fully, upon the teſtimony of theſe Witneſſes that Jeſus is the Son of God, He will account it a ſmall buſineſs to deny his own will as Jeſus did. He will never complain that he muſt refrain from any thing in obedience to him; and whatſoever he requires him to do, he will eſteem it an exceſſive pleaſure. For there can remain no doubt in his mind, that if he be the Son of God, he hath power to help us & that he wil ever be aſſiſtant to us and bleſs us; becauſe by this faith he dwelleth in us and we in him.

I have read of one, of a Noble Family, delicately educated, and of a tender health, who had a great mind to enter upon a Religious courſe of life (as they ſpeak in the *Roman* Church) but was affrighted out of thoſe thoughts by the apparent difficulty of the exerciſes wherein he was to be imployed; for their ill diet, retirement, poverty, watchings and ſuch like hardſhips he

he imagined could not be endured. Till one day reading thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt, which like a flaſh of lightning ſtruck into his mind (xviii. Pſal. 33. *He maketh my feet like Hindes feet, and ſetteth me upon my high places* (which he expounded to this ſenſe, God will inable me with ſpeed and eaſineſs to run, not only upon the even ground and over the plains, but in craggy and ſteep places; he will lead me not only upon the level, but aſſiſt me to climb Mountains and to overtop the higheſt difficulties that are in my way to Heaven and) immediately he found all his fears vaniſh, his reſolutions determined, and ſuch a courage put into him, that from this time forward he was immoveably bent to that formerly dreadful kind of life. Would not this word of God then, think you, which I have expounded, inſpire us with as manly a reſolution and greatneſs of mind to obey God's unqueſtionable commands, if we did but ſuffer it to penetrate into our hearts? Did we but conceive that we heard the Father ſay to us perpetually, *This is my Son*, This that came by *Water* and *Blood*, that climbed even the croſs it ſelf, that ſurmounted the higheſt difficulties, He is my beloved Son; and if we thought we heard the WORD ſay, the *Son of God is come, God is manifeſted*

manifeſted in the fleſh; and felt the *Holy Ghoſt* inſpiring him with the ſame heavenly thoughts; the whole glorious *Trinity* telling us, they will aſſiſt us, and afford us their continual help; it could not but give wings, as I may ſay, to our feet, and make us skip over the moſt mountainous diſcouragements, and run the ways of God's commandments, and not be tired; that we might follow after, and go to the bleſſed Jeſus. For the courſe of life which that Gentleman affected, was that of a Religious Order (as they call it) where they are tied to do more than God commands, to live by a Rule ſtricter than the Goſpel, and under the Will of a Superiour, whom they are bound to obey, as if he were Chriſt himſelf: And it was not the literal ſenſe of the place neither which thus animated him, and put it into his heart to undergo ſuch a ſervitude. And therefore if he did the will of men ſo chearfully, and undertook more than God requires of us, and upon a weaker perſwaſion, by accommodating the ſenſe of an holy word to his own preſent thoughts; there is no doubt but a right faith would indue us with the like power (notwithſtanding the appearance of great labours) in the true ſervice of God, in obedience to his indiſpenſable commands:

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we having this word of God to ſtrengthen our faith, the prime and natural intention of which is to make us confident, that He who leads us in this way, the Captain that conducts us, is Gods Son, his moſt dearly beloved; who cannot but be as faithful as he is powerful to make good all his promiſes to us.

And we ſhould the rather ſtrive to follow after him, and to run with joy the race that is ſet before us, becauſe then we ſhall have the honour ſtill *to teſtify* to him upon Earth; we ſhall be his *WITNESSES* and prove at this day, by his mighty power in our hearts and lives, that he is the Son of God. *Turks* and *Jews* that read not our Books, cannot be convinced by any arguments at preſent, ſo much as by this. They ſee how we live; but we can ſhew them no Miracles to convince them, nor can we make them hear the voice from Heaven for their converſion; till we can recommend our Bible to their ſerious conſideration. And the only way to do that, is for us to live more juſtly, ſoberly, charitably and piouſly than the reſt of the World. By which means they may be brought to have better thoughts of Jeſus, by having good thoughts of us; and be induced to read our Books, by ſeeing ſo much of them in our good works.

And what happy days might we hope to ſee, could we but uſe this argument to prove Jeſus to be the Son of God; that no men are ſo good, ſo holy and pure, ſo peaceable and kind-hearted, ſo free from fraud & all guile, as thoſe who are called by his Name? How glorious then would the name of our Lord be over all the world? *His word would run, and be glorified* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Theſſ.* iii. 1.) juſt as it did in ancient days; when they could ſay confidently, *Non de noſtro, ſed ex illorum numero*, &c*. "They are "not of our company, but of theirs (that "follow the Heathen ſuperſtition) who rob "and ſteal by Sea and Land, who murder "and kill, who cheat and cozen, who drink "and ſwill, who proſtitute their bodies and "profane themſelves by filthy luſts; the "Whores, the Fornicators, the Cheats, the "Forgers of Wills and Teſtaments, the "Drunkards, the Thieves, the perjured Per-"ſons, and all the reſt of the wicked crew "are of their number: nothing of this can "be objected to our People, *whoſe whole Re-"ligion is to live without wickedneſs, nay with-"out any ſpot or blemiſh.* How would it ſtop the mouth of all the world, nay make them fall down and confeſs that God is certainly among us, could we but ſay thus in our days and make ſuch a challenge to *Turks* and all other

* *Lact. lib. 5. cap. 19.*

other unbelievers? Shall we always let our Saviour want this noble teſtimony? Shall we do nothing but talk of him, and prattle of our Faith, and make our boaſt that we are right Believers, and damn all Infidel People? Alas, alas! theſe big words will do nothing. As long as they ſee us live no better than they, we ſhal not perſwade them that we believe better. And therefore let us have this worthy ambition in our hearts, to become *WITNESSES* our ſelves unto Jeſus. Let us ſtudy how *to ſhow forth his praiſes*, (or rather *Powers**) *who hath called us into this marvellous light.* And ſince we cannot do it by Miracles, let us do it by well doing and patient continuance in it. So ſhall *the Name of our Lord Jeſus be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt* (2 Theſſ. i. 12.) who at his appearing will *bear WITNESS* to us (xi. Hebr. 4.) that we were faithful and righteous, by receiving us, as God did *Abel*'s gifts, up unto himſelf.

* ἀρετὰς, 1 Pet. 2. 9.

For hereby alſo we ſhall be inſtruments of conveying this Faith down to Poſterity, with ſome power. Would you not have them believe the ſame that you do? Is it not your deſire that the next Age may confeſs him, as well as this? There is no ſuch effectual means can be thought of to pro-

mote and propagate his Faith, as the fruits of it in an holy life. This will make men afraid now to ſpeak evil of him; and this will teach our Children after us to be zealous profeſſors of Chriſtianity, and not ſuch cold believers or ſuch infidels as we ſee and hear of in the World. Aſſure your ſelves it is Prophaneneſs which hath made ſo many unbelievers in this Age. Increaſe of wickedneſs not only in themſelves but others, hath made ſome ſo impudent as to ſcoff at Religion and blaſpheme Chriſt. While they ſee thoſe who acknowledge him do no better than themſelves, they are inclined to think that their belief makes them no more worth, than thoſe who have none at all. Nay, ſince they concur with them in their wicked practiſes, they imagine that their fear of Hell, and hope of Heaven is no part of their belief, but only of their profeſſion. The hands of Infidels are ſtrengthened in their impieties, by the perfidiouſneſs of ungodly believers. They joyn with them to pull down Chriſtian belief; and make that be thought nothing, which doth nothing above what infidelity doth. And therefore let all thoſe who love the memory of our Saviour, who love their poſterity, and would not have them in danger to be drown'd in a deluge of infidelity, put a ſtop

to

to it; by *holding the myſtery of the faith in a pure conſcience.* 1 Tim. iii. 9. *Let every one that nameth the Name of Chriſt depart from iniquity*, and endeavour all he can to ſupport the honour of his Name and of his Religion, by a ſtrict obſervance of all his holy commands. They who believe not or mind not what they believe, may *think it ſtrange that you run not with them to the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you* (1 Pet. iv. 4.) *But ye beloved, building up your ſelves on your moſt holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghoſt, keep your ſelves in love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life.* Jude 20. 21.

And that now is the next thing which flows from hence. If we believe the Record or *Witneſs* which God hath given of his Son, it contains in it the greateſt joy in the World. For *this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life: and this life is in his Son.* But I muſt refer that to another Diſcourſe alone by it ſelf.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy-Ghoſt.

GLory *in the higheſt*; Let the Holy and undivided Trinity be for ever glorified by all Mankind; eſpecially by all Chri-

ſtian People: who are made partakers of *the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt. Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: But God hath revealed them unto us by his ſpirit. Bleſſed be God.*

I moſt thankfully receive the manifold teſtimony which he hath given of his well beloved Son; and humbly *bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom the whole family of Heaven and Earth is named, that he would grant me according to the riches of his glory, to be ſtrengthned with might by the ſame ſpirit in the inner man, that Chriſt may dwell in my heart by faith; that being rooted and grounded in love, I may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the bredth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge, that I may be filled with all the fulneſs of God.*

And God forbid that any Soul who hears the voice of theſe Witneſſes of God, ſhould *refuſe and turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven:* and hath declared to us the unſearchable riches of God's grace, and the whole counſel of his will. O that all they, upon whom the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt hath

hath ſhined, may moſt heartily believe in his Name. Let them all be *knit together in love, unto all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt; in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdome and knowledge.* And God forbid, that any of them ſhould *hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs. But as they have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo let them walk in him; rooted and built up in him, and eſtabliſhed in the faith, as they have been taught, abounding therein with thankſgiving.*

And quicken that faith, O thou author and finiſher of it, that it may work with great power in all Chriſtian hearts: and mightily bow their wills to forgo any of their own deſires, rather than diſpleaſe thee, and forfeit thy love and favour. Let it inable them to overcome the World; that they may be no longer ſlaves to the luſts of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye and the pride of life; but conquering all theſe, may *yield themſelves unto God to be the ſervants of righteouſneſs, and obey from the heart that form of doctrine which is delivered unto them.* And may the powerful working of faith and love and hope, make all our duty eaſie to us; that we may ever render thee cheerful as well as conſtant ſervice. May thy teſtimo-

ſtimonies be our daily delight, and *the rejoycing of our heart.* May we *love them above gold, yea above fine gold.* May they be *dearer unto us than thouſands of gold and ſilver.* May we daily *renew* our ſtrength; *and run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.* May the holineſs of our lives bear witneſs to the ſincerity of our faith; that others may *glorifie thee our God for our profeſſed ſubjection to the Goſpel of Chriſt.* And we *obtaining a good report by faith,* and carrying this teſtimony out of the world with us, that we have pleaſed thee; thou mayſt receive us to thy ſelf, to be glorified with thee, and to rejoyce in thy love towards us for ever. *Amen.*

THE END.

Our Lords Ascension.

Acts. 1: 9. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, & a Cloud receiued him out of their sight. 10 And while they stedfastly looked toward heauen, behold two men stood by them in white apparell. 11. Which also said, this same Iesus shall so come, as you haue seen him go into heauen.

THE WITNESSES TO CHRISTIANITY; OR, The Certainty of our *FAITH* and *HOPE*:

In a Diſcourſe upon

1 S. JOHN V. 11.

PART II.

By SYMON PATRICK, D.D.
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majeſty.

LONDON,
Printed by *E. Fleſher*, for *R. Royſton*, Bookſeller to His moſt Sacred Majeſty.
MDCLXXVII.

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TO

The most Reverend Father in God,

GILBERT,

By Divine Providence, Lord Archbishop of

CANTERBURY,

Primate of all *England*, and Metropolitan; and one of His Majestie's most Honourable Privy Council, *&c.*

May it please Your Grace

TO cast your eye upon the Second Part of that Work, the First Part of which I took the confidence to addres unto your Grace *the last year. It is concerning that* ETERNALL LIFE which was with the Father, *as St.* John *speaks; and now is manifested to us by his Son* Jesus Christ, *who hath published the most gracious*

Purposes of God the Father towards us. The thoughts of which, as they cannot but be at all times exceeding welcome to Devout Christians, (especially to those who are faithfull Ministers in Christ's *Kingdom) so never more, then when they see their Departure is at hand. In which regards I doubt not this Treatise will be acceptable to your* Grace, *because it contains a Description and full Assurance of that happy Life which you shortly expect. For there is nothing so reviving in our declining Age, as to think that the passage out of this Life leads us not to Death, but to Immortality; and that it will not take away our Happiness from us, but give us a purer enjoyment of it:* Pleasure not mixed with a mortall body, but sincere and free from Grief and Sorrow. For when we shall be set at liberty and delivered from this Prison, we shall come thither where there is no Labour, no Sighing, nor Old age; but a Life of perfect ease and tranquillity, that breeds no trouble, nor any other evill; but is serene and clear

in

in an immovable Reſt and Peace. Where the happy Inhabitants ſweetly contemplate the nature of things; and philoſophize, not for Popularity and the Theatre, but for the finding out ſolid and everlaſting Truth.

I have but tranſlated the words of Plato* *(or of ſome other Philoſopher that hath borrowed his name,) who was much pleaſed in ſuch thoughts as theſe: though he made but uncertain gueſſes at that bleſſed ſtate, which our Lord hath ſo clearly revealed, and ſo ſtrongly demonſtrated; that we have reaſon, with never-ceaſing joy, both in life and death to give him thanks for ſo great a Grace. For as there is nothing beyond this that the heart of man can wiſh; ſo nothing of ſuch importance to our preſent Happineſs in this World. For which cauſe the* Jews *have thought fit to expunge thoſe from the number of* Iſraelites, *who do not believe the Immortality of the Soul, and the Reſurrection of the dead; and to reſolve,*

* in Axiocho, p. 370.

that they shall have no part in the World to come, though they otherwise live orderly, and observe the Precepts of the Law. For such men, they saw, opened a door to all licentiousness; and could never do so much good by any other means, as they did hurt by subverting this Belief.

Which I have endeavoured therefore to establish by such Arguments, as they were ignorant of, till our Blessed Lord and Saviour appeared; who, as St. Matthew observes out of the Psalmist, uttered things which had been kept secret from the foundation of the World. Maimonides himself saith, in his last Chapter of his Book concerning Kings, that at the coming of Christ, things hidden and profound shall be laid open and revealed to all. Which is true of nothing more, I have shewn, then of that which is the greatest desire of all mankind, immortall Life. Of which though I have not treated according to the dignity of the Subject; yet I am confident I have laid a

good

good Foundation, to be improved by the labours of those who have more skill and more leisure. And it is a very great satisfaction, to have done anything (though never so small) for the honour of our ever-Blessed Lord and Master: whom it is the highest glory in the world to serve in faithfulness and truth. For He will not fail to reward such services with an ample recompence: being a Prince so great, that nothing is beyond his Power; and so gracious, that his Servants have reason to expect the best effects of his Good will. Which may very well content us, whatsoever usage we meet with all at present: And should mightily excite us, as St. Chrysostom *often and earnestly exhorts**, neglecting the suspicions, and the reproaches, and the praises too of men, to study this one thing alone; how to be conscious to our selves of no evill: which will bring us in the end, both here and hereafter, the greater glory.

* *Homil.* 87. *in Matth. p.* 539.

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The God of all Grace bless this Work to the settling and increasing this holy Faith and Resolution in all our hearts; whereby we shall also obtain the sweetest foretasts of the Joys of the future State. And may your Grace be blest with many of them, to support the infirmities of Old age; and having finished your days, have an easie passage to that better Life; and there receive from the Chief Pastour, when he shall appear, the Crown of glory which fadeth not away. Which is the hearty Prayer of

My Lord,

Your Grace's

in all dutifull Observance,

ST. PATRICK.

TO THE
READER.

I Have no other reaſon to give for adding one more to that heap of Books, which men complain is already grown too great; but the hope I have of doing ſome ſervice to our Lord, by making a farther ſearch (as I promiſed in the concluſion of the former Part of this Work) into the Teſtimony of theſe Divine Witneſſes, concerning ETERNALL LIFE.

The Hope of which is the moſt precious Legacy the Son of God hath left us; the Hindge upon which all Religion turns: without which it would be the greateſt Vanity (as *Lactantius* * often ſpeaks) to obey the commands of Vertue; for whoſe ſake we muſt endure not onely many Labours, but oftimes ſore Calamities. *We were born* (as he diſcourſes elſewhere *) *to acknowledge God the Maker of us and of the World: whom we therefore*

* *Lib.* vi. *c.* 9. vii. 1.

* *Lib.* vii. 6.

therefore acknowledge, that we may worship him; and therefore worship him, that we may receive Immortality for a reward of our labours, (because his service ingages us in the greatest:) and therefore Immortality is bestowed on us for a recompence, that, being made like to the Angels, we may serve the Father and Lord of all for ever, and be the Eternall Kingdom of God. This is the Chief of all things, this is the Secret of God, this is the Mystery of the World: to which they are strangers, who, following their present pleasures, have addicted themselves to terrestriall and frail goods; and sunk their Souls, born to celestiall enjoyments, into delights as deadly as they are muddy and dirty.

And it is the singular Priviledge of Christians, as I have demonstrated, to be assured of a Good so great, by so many most credible Witnesses: whose Testimony none can refuse, but they that will be so absurd as to believe none at all. The *Father*, the *Word*, the *Holy Ghost*, the *Water*, the *Blood*, and the *Spirit*, declare so unanimously and so plainly, that the Lord *Jesus* will give Eternall Life to his followers; that what the Oratours said in flattery to the *Athenians* in the

time

time of the *Chremonidian* War, may in truth be ſaid to us, if we alter but one word: that *other things indeed are common to us with the reſt of the World*; πλὴν δ' ἐπὶ τὴν ὑπερκόσμιον ἀνδρώπους φέρουσαν ὁδὸν Χριστιανοὶ εἰδέναι μόνοι, *but the way that leads men to heaven is known to Chriſtians alone.* Who have a manifold grace beſtowed on them; enjoying not onely a Promiſe of Eternall Life, (which the World never had before,) but that Promiſe atteſted by ſo many Witneſſes: who tell us alſo, it is in the power of him that died for us, to conferr it on us; as well as to ſhew us by what means we may become ſo exceeding Bleſſed. Athenæus in Deipnoſoph. L. vi. p. 250.

The ſerious Reader, I doubt not, will be ſenſible of all this, when he hath peruſed the following Work. In which I have endeavoured to ſatisfy thoſe alſo, who wiſh I had ſaid ſomething of that part of this Record which I undertook to explain; THESE THREE ARE ONE. Which words, I have reaſon to believe, (whatſoever the *Socinians* have pretended to the contrary,) were always a part of this Holy Scripture. For they are alledged by Saint *Cyprian* in his Book of the *Unity of the Catholick Church*; to

ſhew

shew how dangerous it is to break that Unity, by the clashing of our wills, which not onely coheres by celestiall Sacraments, but proceeds, as he speaks, from the Divine firmness. *For our Lord saith, I and the Father are one. And again, it is written of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, Et hi tres unum sunt, And these three are one.* By which that the Apostle would have us to understand, not merely the consent of their Testimony, (though that is not to be excluded,) but the Unity of their Nature or Essence, we have great reason to think. Because there can no account be given, why he should not use the same form of speech here, which follows, when he speaks of the other three Witnesses; if these three in Heaven were no otherwise three then those three in Earth. Which being admitted, (and if we take in the constant sense of the Church to interpret the words, we cannot make any farther doubt of it,) that *these three are one* in their Essence; then it is certain there are *Three Persons*, whose Essence is one and the same. For else there would not be *three* Witnesses in heaven, but onely *one*: which would cross the design of the Apostle; whose scope is, to shew that our Faith doth not rely upon a single

ſingle Teſtimony. And indeed the Holy Scriptures, in other places, aſcribe ſuch Actions and Works to each of them, as are proper to Perſons: which is a ſufficient warrant to the Church, to expreſs the diſtinction that is between them by this Name. *Non quia Scriptura dicit*, (as St. *Auguſtine* * ſpeaks concerning this very buſineſs,) *ſed quia Scriptura non contradicit*; *Not becauſe the Scripture ſaith they are Perſons, but becauſe the Scripture doth not ſay the contrary:* but rather, I may adde, directs us to ſay they are, for the reaſon before mentioned. "When humane ſcantneſs (as that Holy Doctour of the "Church goes on) endeavoured to expreſs in words that which it conceived "in the ſecret of the mind concerning "our Lord God the Creatour, it was afraid to ſay there were *three Eſſences*; "leſt any diverſity ſhould be thought to "be in that higheſt Equality: and on "the other ſide, to ſay there were not "*tria quædam, really three*, was to fall into the hereſy of *Sabellius*. For it is "certain there is the *Father*, and the *Son*, "and the *Holy Ghoſt*; and that the *Son* "is not the *Father*, nor the *Holy Ghoſt* "the *Father* or the *Son*. It ſought therefore what three it ſhould call them; "and

* *Lib.* vii. *de Trinitate, cap.* 4.

" and it said, *three Persons*; (as the *La-*
" *tine* Church speaks;) by which Name
" it would not have any diversity under-
" stood, but onely singularity. That
" not onely *Unity* should be there con-
" ceived, because we say there is one
" Essence; but a *Trinity* also, because
" we say there are three Persons.

This Faith we ought to defend; and in this simple belief we ought, I have shewn, to acquiesce. We ought to defend it, because it is the Catholick Faith, revealed in the Holy Scriptures; according as they have been always understood by the Church of *Christ*. *For it is sufficient* (as St. *Gregory Nyssen** excellently discourses against those that demanded more proof of these things) *to the demonstration of this Doctrine, that we have a Tradition descended to us, like an inheritance, by succession from the Apostles; and transmitted through the hands of holy men that followed them. They that will innovate, need the help of mighty arguments, if they will go about to shake the Faith, not of men built on the sand, and wavering like* Euripus, *but grave, settled, and constant in their opinion. And while we see nothing but mere discourse against it,* τὸ ὅτας ἠλι-

* *Lib.* iii. *contra* Eunomium, p. 126.

Καὶ ταῦτ' ἄνοους, who is there so silly and brutish, as to think the Doctrine of the Evangelists and Apostles, and of those Lights that succeeded them in the Church, to be weaker then their Bubble without demonstration?

But we shall not wholly avoid the imputation of folly, unless we also rest satisfied in this plain belief; not busying our selves in more curious enquiries. For the greatest Lights in the Church, I have shewn, will lead us no farther; but tell us we shall groap in darkness, if we will needs pry too much into this Mystery. Which we ought to discourse of as becomes Divines, not Philosophers. Lest, as *Henricus à Gandava* censures *Albertus Magnus*, (in his Book of Ecclesiastical Writers,) *whilst we follow too much the subtilty of secular Philosophy, we cloud the splendour of Theological purity.* We must remember that we are men, and that our understandings are but shallow: which ought not therefore to venture boldly into such depths as that of the Divine Essence. There is nothing so much becomes us, when we think of God, as an holy fear and reverence, producing in us low thoughts of our selves. Without which

we are not like to be illuminated from above; nor can we, ſhould we know never ſo much, be acceptable to God. *Quid enim prodeſt alta de Trinitate diſputare, ſi careas humilitate, unde diſpliceas Trinitati?* (as *Thomas à Kempis* honeſtly ſpeaks:) For what will it profit thee to diſpute loftily of the Trinity, if, through want of humility, thou diſpleaſeſt the Trinity?

The way to ETERNALL LIFE, it is certain, lies in that rode; which we ſhall be in danger to miſs, if we give our ſelves too great a liberty of diſputing about things ſo much above our reach. We ought to be aware of this artifice of the grand Deceiver: who is wont to draw us ſecretly from attending to our known duty, while we are amuſing our ſelves with ſublime ſpeculations. Which the holy Fathers of the Church have carefully obſerved, and caution'd us againſt by their ſevere reproofs. *What means* (ſaith Saint *Gregory Nazianzen* *) *this ambitious humour of diſputing, and itch of the tongue? what new diſeaſe and unſatiable appetite is this? While our hands are bound, why do we arm our tongue? Hoſpitality, Brotherly love, Conjugall affection, Virginity, are no longer praiſed. Feeding the poor,*

* *Orat.* xxxiii. *p.* 533.

poor, Psalmody, Nocturnall stations, Tears are not now in request. We do not bring under the body by Fastings; nor leave it a while, to go to God by Prayer. We do not bring the worse in subjection to the better; the Dust, I mean, to the Spirit. We do not make our life a meditation of death. Our Passions are not mastered. Forgetting our heavenly Originall, we let anger swell and rage; and take no care to suppress that pride and haughtiness which will at last lay us low. We do not chastise irrational sadness, nor foolish pleasure, nor unchaste laughter, nor disorderly aspects, nor unsatiable hearing, nor immoderate talking, nor absurd thoughts, nor any of those things by which the Evill one takes advantage against us to our ruine. There is nothing like to this; but quite contrary, we give liberty to other mens evill affections, and (like Princes when they have got the Victory) require nothing of them, but onely that they be on our side, and take our part: though they oppose God the more impiously and audaciously.

These things, it seems, were then too manifest to be denied; and notwithstanding these reproaches of holy men, the humour propagated it self to after-times. For the cure or prevention of which, no-

thing is so necessary to be believed and preserved perpetually in mind, as that Counsel which the same great Doctour gives in another place *. Βέλει θεολογεῖν γενέσθαι, &c. *Wouldst thou be a Divine, and worthy of God?* Τὰς ἐντολὰς φύλαττε, *Keep the Commandments: Go in the way of God's precepts. Practice is the best step thou canst take to contemplation.* Which is the surest advice for all Christians to follow: who must not think by any other means to arrive at that blissfull sight of God; in which our knowledge of him will be perfected in the other World.

* *Orat.* xxix. *p.* 493.

Of which *Beatificall Vision* I have not adventured to say much in the ensuing Treatise, because *our manner of living* (as Saint *Augustine* * speaks in an Epistle of his upon this very subject) *is of more consideration in this inquiry, then our manner of speaking.* Nam qui didicerunt à Domino *Jesu* mites esse & humiles corde, plùs cogitando & orando proficiunt, quàm legendo & audiendo. *For they that have learned of the Lord* Jesus *to be lowly and humble in heart, profit more by meditation and prayer, then they can by reading and hearing.* But something I have said, as far as I could find any directions in the Holy

* *Epist.* cxii. *ad* Paulinam.

Holy Scriptures: which warrant us to conclude, that the participation we have of God now, ſhall be ſo improved in the other World, that whatſoever we enjoy of him here, we ſhall in a higher and after a more perfect manner, with the addition of immortality, enjoy when we riſe from the dead. We are now *the Sons of God* by faith in *Chriſt Jeſus*; who bids us be confident of it, and rejoyce in it: And yet he mentions this as a ſpeciall priviledge belonging to us after the reſurrection; when we ſhall *not marry nor die any more*, but be *equall to the Angels, and be* υἱοὶ τῆς Θεοῦ *the Sons of God, being the children of the Reſurrection.* xx. *Luk.* 35, 36. Juſt as it was with our Lord *Chriſt* himſelf, who was in a more ſpeciall and excellent manner called the Son of God, after his riſing from the dead; when God ſaid to him, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:* (advanced him, that is, to a more excellent degree of likeneſs to him in power and dominion, putting all things under his feet:) So it ſhall be with all thoſe Sons whom he brings unto glory. They ſhall be more nearly related to God, at the Reſurrection, and reſemble him more exactly; whoſe Image they now bear in Wiſedom and Goodneſs. But

how much he will then impart of himself to us, the Apostles themselves were not able to inform us. *We are now the Sons of God*, saith Saint *John* 1 Ep. iii. 2. *but it doth not yet appear what we shall be, how we shall be the Sons of God*, in the other world. We now find (I may adde by a parity of reason) a great pleasure in holy thoughts; we feel the joys of ardent love; are ravisht with the melody of Songs of praise, and with the sweet violence of a glance of light from heaven upon us; and we are sure we shall be so happy as to have a great increase of this pleasure, when we remove from hence: But it doth not appear how we shall think; nor what will be the satisfaction of heavenly Love; nor what new Songs shall be put into our mouths; nor how God will look in upon us, when we shall see him as he is. We must be content to know, that all these will bear a proportion to the infinite Goodness of Him who is Omnipotent, and hath loved us so much as to purchase us with a great price, and to give his Holy Spirit to us; and according to the Love of him that died for us, and is gone to prepare a place for us, that where he is, there we may be also.

In

In this hope we may now *rejoyce* (though we do not at preſent ſee our Lord) *with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* For I have proved, by undeniable arguments, that God the Father hath given power to his Son *Jeſus*, to make us more happy then we can now conceive; and that He will undoubtedly bring us to live with himſelf. What greater Good can we deſire then this? Or what greater Motive can be thought of, to perſwade us ſincerely to embrace the Chriſtian Religion; whoſe buſineſs it is, (as *Lactantius* concludes his Book of a *Bleſſed Life,*) to direct us to the Eternall Rewards of the heavenly Treaſure? "Of "which that we may be capable, we "muſt preſently diſingage our ſelves "from the inſnaring pleaſures of this "Life; which deceive mens Souls by "their pernicious ſweetneſs. And how "great a felicity ought we to eſteem it, "to go, being delivered from the impu-"rities of this Earth, to that moſt equall "Judge, and moſt indulgent Father; "who for our labours will give us reſt, "for death life, for darkneſs light, for "earthly ſhort goods, thoſe that are ce-"leſtiall and eternall? None of the

" ſharpneſſes and miſeries which we en-
" dure here, while we are employed in
" the works of righteouſneſs, are in any
" manner to be compared with that re-
" ward. Therefore if we will be wiſe,
" if we will be happy, let us propoſe
" the worſt things, that can be, to our
" ſelves, and reſolve to ſuffer them: ſince
" it is manifeſt, that this frail Pleaſure
" we have here ſhall not be without
" puniſhment; nor Vertue without a
" divine reward. All mankind ought
" to endeavour, with all ſpeed, to di-
" rect themſelves into the right way;
" that, having undertaken and perfor-
" med the duties of a vertuous life, and
" patiently endured its labours, they
" may be worthy to have God for their
" Comforter. For our Father and Lord,
" who made and ſettled the Heaven,
" who brought the Sun and the reſt of
" the Stars into it, and out of Nothing
" raiſed the reſt of the World to this per-
" fection wherein we ſee it, beholding
" the Errours of mankind, ſent a Leader,
" who ſhould lay before us the way of
" righteouſneſs. Him let us all follow;
" Him let us hear: Him let us moſt de-
" voutly obey. For He alone hath pur-
" ged mens hearts by his truth, and ſet

" due

" due bounds to their desires and fears;
" shewing them the chiefest Good, to
" which they should tend, and the way
" whereby it may be attained. Nor
" hath He onely shewn it, but he hath
" gone before us in it; lest any should
" shun the course of Vertue, because of
" the difficulty that attends it. Let the
" way of perdition and deceit therefore
" be forsaken; in which death lies con-
" cealed under the inticements of plea-
" sure. And the nearer any man, by
" reason of his years, sees that day ap-
" proaching in which he must depart this
" life, let him cast in his mind the more
" seriously, how he may go away as pure
" as may be; how he may come inno-
" cent to his Judge; and not, as those
" whose minds are blinded, how he may
" satisfie his lusts more greedily before he
" go. Let every man deliver himself out
" of that gulph, while he may, while he
" hath some power; and convert to God
" with his whole Soul: that he may se-
" curely expect that day, in which God,
" the Lord and Governour of the World,
" will judge every man's works and
" thoughts. Let him not onely neglect,
" but fly from, those things of which
" men are now so greedy. Let him look

upon

" upon his Soul as better then theſe fal-
" lacious goods, whoſe poſſeſſion is un-
" certain and fading. For they go away
" continually, more ſwiftly then they
" come: and if we could enjoy them to
" the laſt, they muſt be left to others.
" We can carry nothing away, but a life
" piouſly and innocently led. He ſhall
" come rich and wealthy to God, whom
" Continence, Mercy, Patience, Charity
" and Faith ſhall wait upon. This is
" our Inheritance, which can neither be
" taken from any man, nor transferred
" to another. And whoſoever is deſirous
" of it, may have it if he pleaſe. But
" let no man truſt in Riches, nor in Dig-
" nity, nor in Kingly Power: theſe do
" not make us immortall. Let us give
" our mind to Righteouſneſs, which a-
" lone will be our inſeparable Compa-
" nion, till it bring us to God. As long
" as we live, let us continue our warfare
" unwearied; let us keep our watch;
" let us valiantly encounter with the
" enemy: that being conquerours, and
" triumphing over the vanquiſht adver-
" ſary, we may receive from our Lord
" the reward of Vertue, which he hath
" promiſed.

There

There is the greateſt reaſon, I have demonſtrated, to expect it with ſuch a lively Faith as was in the firſt Chriſtians, (in whoſe words I have choſen to deliver theſe things, rather then mine own,) who confidently looked Death in the face, in whatſoever ſhape it appeared; and were not in the leaſt daunted at the ſight of it. There were innumerable experiments made of it, not onely in Men, but in Women and Children; as the great *Athanaſius* * juſtly glories. Who takes this to be "no ſmall token "of the aboliſhing death, (ſo that it had "no power, but was indeed dead it ſelf,) "that it was contemned by all the Diſciples of *Chriſt*. Before whoſe Divine "appearing, φοβερὸς λοιπὸν καὶ τοῖς ἁγίοις, it was dreadfull to the Saints "themſelves, who bewailed and lamented thoſe that died, as if they were "loſt. But ſince our Saviour roſe from "the dead, it is no longer terrible; but "all that believe on him tread it under "foot, as if it were nothing; and chuſe "rather to die, then deny the Faith of "*Chriſt*. For they know certainly that "the dead do not periſh; but that they "both live, and ſhall alſo be made incorrup-

* Περὶ ἐναν-θρωπήσεως τοῦ Λόγου, &c. p. 80, &c.

" corruptible by the Reſurrection. That
" Evill one, the Devill, who heretofore
" by death inſulted over us, is himſelf
" alone now left truly dead. Of which
" this is a ſign, that, whereas before
" men believed on *Chriſt*, they lookt on
" Death as very formidable; ſince they
" embraced his Faith and Doctrine, they
" do ſo much ſlight it, that they run
" chearfully to it, and become Witneſ-
" ſes againſt him of our Saviour's Reſur-
" rection. Mere Children make nothing
" of it. The weaker Sex, (ſo weak is
" he that had the power of Death now
" grown,) who were formerly deceived
" by him, laugh him to ſcorn, as one that
" is dead, and hath loſt his power. Juſt
" as a Tyrant, when a lawfull Prince
" hath vanquiſht him, and bound him
" hand and foot, is deſpiſed, and made
" a mocking-ſtock by all that paſs by
" him, who no longer fear his rage and
" cruelty: even ſo is Death, being over-
" come by our Saviour, trampled upon
" by all his Diſciples; who bearing wit-
" neſs to their Maſter, deride it in thoſe
" words of the Apoſtle, *O Death, where*
" *is thy Victory? O grave, where is thy*
" *ſting?* What conqueſts haſt thou to
" brag of now? Behold, we are all

" made

" made alive, through *Jesus Christ* our " Lord.

" Mankind, it is certain, naturally ab- " hors Death, and the diſſolution of their " Body; and therefore it is no ſmall de- " monſtration of our Saviour's victory o- " ver it, that he hath ſo changed the na- " ture of man, as to perſwade even chil- "dren in *Chriſt*, and tender girls, to make " no account of this Life, and with joy " to think of Death. It may ſeem to ſome " an incredible thing, that Death ſhould "thus have loſt its power: but ſo it doth, " that there ſhould be a cloath made of " an *Indian* ſtone, which fire cannot burn; " or that a mighty Tyrant, notwithſtan- " ding all his forces, ſhould on a ſudden be " ſubdued, and held in chains, by no vi- " ſible power. Let him that doubts of " either of theſe put on that cloath, or go " into the Dominions of the Conquerour; " and he ſhall be ſatisfied of the weakneſs " of the fire, and of the Tyrant. In like "manner, if we meet with an Unbeliever, "who, after ſo many Wonders and ſo ma- "ny Martyrs of *Jeſus Chriſt*, makes a "doubt whether Death be deſtroyed, and " a period put to his Kingdome; we can- "not blame his admiration at ſo great a " thing:

"thing; provided he do not harden him-
"ſelf in infidelity, nor impudently op-
"poſe thoſe things which are moſt evi-
"dent. Let him, for his ſatisfaction, doe
"as he that would know whether ſuch a
"Tyrant, as I now ſpoke of, be vanqui-
"ſhed; go into the Conquerour's Coun-
"try, ſubmit himſelf, I mean, to Chriſtian
"inſtruction, and receive the Faith of
"*Chriſt*; and then he ſhall ſoon ſee the
"weakneſs of Death, and the victory that
"is got over it. Πολλοὶ γὰρ ἀπιςοῦντες πρό-
"τερον, καὶ χλευάζοντες, &c. *For many*
"*who were once not onely Unbelievers, but*
"*Mockers, have afterwards believed; and*
"*ſo contemned Death, that they have be-*
"*come Martyrs for* Chriſt's *ſake.*

I pray God theſe Treatiſes may have the like happy effect upon ſome doubting or unbelieving Soul, who ſhall vouchſafe to examine the Evidence I have produced for the Chriſtian Faith. Againſt which I beſeech ſuch perſons not to ſhut their eyes, nor harden their hearts in infidelity. If they will condeſcend ſo far, as to conſider what we ſay; they may, of Scoffers, become ſuch zealous Aſſertours of the power and glory of the Lord *Jeſus*, as to be willing and ready (though there will

be

be no occasion, I hope, to try their resolution) to testify their love to him, and hope in him, with the loss of their lives. And as long as they live, they will find it the highest of all pleasures, to think that they shall never die. Of which happiness we can by no means be so well secured, as by the Christian Religion. All the Philosophers of greatest fame (as *Eusebius* * observes) talkt like Children about the Immortality of the Soul, in comparison with Christians. Among whom, saith he, boys and girls, and those Barbarians too, and the most despicable people, declare this truth ἔργοις πρότερον ἢ ῥήμασι, not so much by their discourses as by their deeds, which they perform by the power and cooperation of our Saviour. The Discourses of *Aristotle* about this matter are justly said by Saint *Greg. Nazianzen* * to be ὄντως περὶ ψυχῆς λόγος because, as *Jacobus Billius* hath demonstrated, he thought the Souls of men to be mortall. And accordingly *Theodoret* ranks him, in this regard, with *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, who boldly said they were corruptible. So little force was there, as he also observes *, in the many discourses of the most wise *Plato*, to prove the Soul's Immortality; which could not make his greatest Scholar in love

* *Lib.* 1. *Præpar. Evang.* c. 4.

* *Orat.* xxxiii. *p.* 535.

* *Lib.* v. *Therapeutices, p.* 546. 556.

love with his Opinion. "Whereas our "Fiſhermen, and Publicans, and Shoe-"makers, perſwaded both *Greeks*, and "*Romans*, and *Egyptians*, and all other "Nations of mankind, to believe it. And "you ſhall ſee, ſaith he, not onely the "Doctours of the Church, but Smiths "and Weavers, and other Artizans, both "men and women, that underſtand theſe "things. And not onely ſuch people as "live in cities, but poor country-men are "ſo well inſtructed, that one may find a "Ditcher or a Neatherd diſcourſing of "the Holy Trinity, of the Creation of "the World; and that knows more of "humane Nature then either *Ariſtotle* or "*Plato*.

For *Plato* himſelf was not conſtant in his Opinions about the ſtate of the Soul after it departed this body. But ſometimes ſpeaks of great torments which the wicked endure in dark priſons; and deſcribes their puniſhments to be dreadfull, by the ſentence of impartiall Judges: and otherwhere he talks as if thoſe Souls were at liberty to chuſe what body they will pleaſe to go into; and that it pleaſes them better to be a Bird, or perhaps an Aſs, then formerly it did to be a Man. Which contrariety

variety of opinion is obſerved, and handſomely repreſented, by *Euſebius* *, whoſe words I ſhall not tranſcribe. For we find the Philoſophers talking ſo diſcontentedly concerning the preſent ſtate of mankind, who are ſubject, they ſay, to more calamities, and therefore in a worſe condition, then any other Creature upon the face of the earth; that it is ſufficient to convince us how little certainty they had of a future ſtate. The ſtedfaſt belief of which being taught, as *Theodoret* obſerves, with one mouth, and without any diſagreement or doubting, by all the Apoſtles and Followers of *Chriſt*, made all Chriſtian people not onely contented with their portion, though more calamitous in thoſe days then any other mens; but alſo chearfull under the ſoreſt burthens that oppreſſed them.

* *Lib.* xiii. *Prepar. c.* 16.

And though the ancient *Hebrews* were taught by holy men of God to know better then the Philoſophers; and God in his infinite goodneſs was pleaſed, when they were in danger of grievous troubles for Religion ſake, then to give them ſtill more and more hope of another life; (as *Grotius* wiſely obſerves, both upon the ſtory of *Elijah*'s calling the Soul of the

Widow's Son back again, 1 *King.* xvii. 21. and upon the dead man's rising again, when he touched the bones of *Elisha*, 2 *King.* xiii. 21. and may be farther verified from the story of the *Maccabees:*) yet it must be acknowledged, there was no particular promise made to them of *Eternall Life*, either before the giving of the Law, or in that Covenant made with them by *Moses*; nor any clear and expres promise in after-times, untill the coming of our Lord *Christ*. Who hath made a New Covenant with us, which is *established upon better promises* then those in the Old, as the holy Writer to the *Hebrews* speaks, viii. 6. For the promises of the Covenant made with them by *Moses* were onely, that they should possess the land of *Canaan*, and lead a happy life there, while they observed his Precepts: But the promises of the Gospell are, that, by obedience to our Lord, we shall come to live eternally with him in the heavens. So the Church of *Christ* hath always understood it, as any one may be satisfied who can reade the Answer of *Ger. Vossius* to *Ravenspergerus*. Where he shews, that the ancient Doctours, especially Saint *Augustine*, lookt upon the Old Testament as containing properly and directly the promises onely

Cap. xxiii.

of

of earthly and temporall things; which were the Figures of those that are celestiall and eternall. The words of Saint *Augustine* are very memorable to this purpose, in a little Book of his, wherein he answers to five Questions put to him by *Honoratus*: to which he adds another of his own, concerning the *Grace of the New Testament*; in which that Grace is revealed, which was hid in the Old. *God willing to shew*, saith he, *that even earthly and temporall felicity is his gift, and ought not to be expected but from him alone, though he long ago to dispense the Old Testament, which belongs to the Old man; from whom this life must needs begin. But those felicities of the Fathers are proclaimed to be granted by the bounty of God, though belonging to this transitory life. For those earthly gifts were the things that were openly and apparently promised and given. Covertly indeed the New Testament was figuratively foretold in all those things, and was understood by a few, whom the same Grace was pleased to honour with the gift of prophecy.* Epist. cxx. cap. 2, 3.

By which gift, bestowed not upon a *few* persons in one Nation, but, as their Prophets foretold, *upon all flesh*, these

things, which were then lockt up in ſecret, are now laid open to the view of all: and ſo plainly revealed, that we reade of ETERNALL LIFE oftner in the New Teſtament, then they did of health, and riches, and victory, and long life, in the Old. Bleſſed be the tender mercy of our God, ſhould all thoſe that have any faith ſay, who hath *called us into his marvellous light:* whereby we ſee ſuch things, as eye never ſaw; and ſee them ſo clearly, that we cannot reaſonably doubt of them. We enjoy the body of that, whereof they had but the ſhadow. We have that in ſubſtance, which they had but in picture. The promiſe of that is ours, which they had onely in the type. We have the proof, the evidence, the demonſtration of that, which was onely repreſented to them in myſticall figures. So far are we illuminated beyond thoſe great Souls, who were the glory of their times, that we underſtand the meaning of their own Books, and the ſignification of all the types and ſhadows, wherein theſe heavenly things were wrapt up and hidden, better then they could do themſelves. For our Lord is riſen from the dead, and hath opened the Kingdom of heaven; and, tearing

the

the veil in pieces, hath ſet before our eyes the holy place not made with hands, eternall in the heavens. Into which he is entred as our Fore-runner, to prepare a place for us; and from thence hath ſent a more abundant meaſure of the Holy Ghoſt, to enlighten the eyes of our underſtanding; that we may know what the hope of Chriſtianity is, and how exceeding glorious that celeſtiall inheritance, which he intends to divide among us. i. *Eph.* 17, 18.

But it is not ſufficient to admire this grace, (I have demonſtrated,) we muſt carefully improve it; or elſe it will be worſe with us then if we had never known it. For if the Word ſpoken by Angels was ſo punctually verified, that every breach of it was duly puniſhed: (as it is ii. *Hebr.* 2, 3, 4.) there is no hope that we ſhould eſcape the ſevereſt effects of God's diſpleaſure, if we *neglect ſo great Salvation* as this; which ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα λαλεῖσθαι, being firſt publiſhed to the world by our Lord *Jeſus*, was farther confirmed by the coming down of the Holy Ghoſt upon his Apoſtles. We are the diſciples of Him, who ſpake as never man ſpake. Whoſe *word of Salvation* (as

his Gospell is called) we then *neglect*, when we mind not what he saith; or do not often think of it; or, having thought of it, prefer every trifle before it, and will not be moved by such a wonderfull grace to obey his precepts. For by the opposition wherein this stands to the *transgression* and *disobedience* mentioned before against *Moses* his Law, we are sufficiently informed wherein this *neglect* principally consists: *viz.* in the transgressing those bounds our Lord hath set us; and disobeying those commands, to the observance of which he incites us by the promise of immortall Life.

It is a fearfull thing to think how miserable they will be, who prove thus inconsiderate; and in how great danger Christians are to be so, by the means of that very deceit which plunged the *Jews* into so many calamities. Because God had manifested more of his love to them, then to other Nations; had given them an excellent Law, spoken to them by his Prophets, instructed them how to offer Sacrifice, and appointed a place where he would dwell among them; they blessed themselves in the outward enjoyment of these singular priviledges; they bragged

ged that they were the seed of *Abraham*, and that they had the Oracles of God, and were a people separated to him from the rest of the world by many holy rites: but they took no care to be obedient to his Laws; and less regarded to be indued with the spirit of faithfull *Abraham*, who left all those earthly goods, in which they placed their chief treasure, for God's sake. Just thus men suffer themselves to be deluded at this day. Because God hath granted us the preeminence even above the *Jews* themselves; hath brought us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, made us the Children of Light, and let us see such things as many Kings and Prophets desired to see, but did not see them; they content themselves with the bare profession of this Religion, and think it enough to be called by such an honourable Name, as that of *Christ*: on whom they rest and rely as the *Jews* did on their Sacrifices; never thinking of being indued with his blessed Nature and Spirit, and offering their Wills intirely to God, as he did. Thus men perish, even in the midst of so great light and means of being saved. And there is no help for them, unless they will grow serious, and consider the design of the Christian Faith.

Which will teach them, after a very few thoughts about it, that our Lord *Jesus* is *the authour of eternall Salvation to those* onely *that obey him*; (v. *Heb.* 9.) and will be so far from protecting others from destruction, that he himself will *be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospell of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 2 *Thess.* i. 7, 8.

I end this Preface as St. *Augustine* begins his third Chapter of his first Book of the Trinity, with the alteration of one word onely in the conclusion. *Whosoever reads this Book, where he is convinced, let him go along with me: where he sticks, let him enquire with me: where he sees his own errour, let him return to me; where mine, let him call me back to him. Thus we shall all walk together in the way of charity; tending to him, of whom it is said, Seek ye his face alway. Whosoever therefore, when he reads, saith, This is not well said, for I do not understand it; let him reprehend my speech, but not my faith. It might, it is likely, have been spoken more plainly: but there is no man ever spoke so, as in all things to please all.*

The

The generall

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IMPRIMATUR.

Guil. Sill, R. P. D. *Hen.* Episcopo *Lond.* à Sacris Domesticis.

Oct. 21. 1676.

1 S. Joh. V. 11.

AND THIS IS THE RECORD, THAT GOD HATH GIVEN TO US ETERNALL LIFE: AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON.

AN INTRODUCTION

To the following

Diſcourſe.

HAving made, in the former Treatiſe, as diligent a ſearch as I could into the Records of Heaven and Earth, and found there the cleareſt Evidences that Jeſus is the Son of God, *(to whom therefore we owe the moſt humble and chearful Obedience;) I purpoſe now to make a farther inquiry into them, after the Royal Powers which belong to ſo great a Prince, who both in his Nature and in his Office ſo infinitely excells all other, that his loyal Subjects may well expect from him the greateſt grace and favour. He was* God appearing as Man, *(to uſe the words of* Ignatius,*)* and Man working mightily as God; *but yet ſubmitted himſelf to the meaneſt condition, and the baſeſt death,* Epiſt. ad Epheſ.

for the purging away our ſins by his blood whereby he obtained, as the moſt ample Dominion over all creatures, ſo the largeſt Power, both to remit ſins, and alſo to reward the ſervices of all thoſe that believe on him. To whom his affection is ſo great and extends it ſelf in ſuch boundleſs love that his kindneſs towards them will not be perfected, I ſhall prove, till he hath beſtowed on them ETERNAL LIFE.

A Bleſſing for which all mankind moſt paſſionately wiſh: not onely becauſe the weakneſs of our bodies, the inconſtancy of all their enjoyments, the troubles we meet with in the world, and the neceſſity of dying, make it moſt deſirable; but becauſe it comes recommended to us by its own proper worth and excellence; which is ſo exceeding great, that it renders the moſt conſtant untroubled poſſeſſion of this world's goods, and a perpetuity in this life (could it be obtained) without any ſickneſs or infirmity, a vile and contemptible purchace in compariſon with it. This therefore all conſiderate minds would gladly be well aſſured of. There is nothing of ſuch importance to their ſatisfaction, as a certainty of immortal happineſs, when they leave this Body. Which will make our Obedi-

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ence to God's commands as ſtedfaſt as our Belief is; and withall moſt ſweet and eaſie, whatſoever oppoſition we have to diſcourage us. For the hope of Eternal Life *is able to lift us up above all the temptations wherewith the world can aſſault us: be they either the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life; or be they thoſe hatreds, reproaches, perſecutions, loſs of goods, yea and death it ſelf, which we may be in danger of for Piety's ſake.*

Now looking a little farther into this Holy Writer, *who hath preſerved the unqueſtionable* Records *concerning theſe matters; I find there is as great a certainty of this* Eternal Life *by* Jeſus Chriſt, *as there is of his being the* Son of God: *and that the very ſame* Witneſſes *who ſo fully declare the one, give no leſs ſtrong Evidence for the proof of the other. For THIS (ſays He,* 1 John v. 11.*) IS THE RECORD, (or WITNESSE,) THAT GOD HATH GIVEN TO US ETERNAL LIFE: AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON. Which words, being a continuation of the foregoing Diſcourſe, carry this ſenſe in them; There is great reaſon you ſhould receive the* Witneſs of God, *(viz. of the Father, Word, and*

Holy Ghoſt, and of the Water, Bloud, and Spirit,) not onely becauſe it is greater then the Witneſs of men, *which you cannot juſtly reject; (v. 9.) and becauſe, if you do reject it, you* make God a Liar, *which who can have the heart to do? (v. 10.) but alſo becauſe the thing which is teſtified to us by theſe* Witneſſes, *when they ſay that* Jeſus *is the Son of God, is of all other the moſt deſirable; viz. that God deſigns for us no leſs bleſſing then* Eternal Life, *which the Lord* Jeſus *hath in his hands to keep for us, and to beſtow upon us.*

The enſuing Diſcourſe then will neceſſarily fall into theſe two Parts. First, *to ſhew what this* Eternal Life *is; and* ſecondly, *to prove the Certainty of it, from the mouth of all thoſe* Witneſſes. *Of the firſt of which I muſt treat with the greater brevity, becauſe it is not the Deſign of the Apoſtle in this place, to give us an account what the* Eternal Life *is, which God hath promiſed; but to ſhew that he hath given us an undoubted right to it, and that it is in the power of that Great Lord, whoſe Servants we are by Faith in him, to diſpoſe of it.*

THE

THE WITNESSES TO Christianity.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Of ETERNAL LIFE in generall.

AND now I launch out, when I go about to ſpeak of *Eternal Life*, into a wide Sea; of which it is but little that our eye can deſcry, or our thoughts fathom, and leſs that I muſt confine my ſelf unto, in this preſent Diſcourſe. There is more contained in theſe two words, ETERNALL LIFE, then all the world can diſcover; though

we have ſo good a Compaſs as the Book of God, whereby to ſteer our courſe, and to guide and aſſiſt us in our Inquiry. We may venture, as far as ever our thoughts will carry us, into this depth; but we ſhall ſtill ſee ſomething beyond all that we can conceive, and be enabled by our ſearch to diſcern more fully, that it hath no bottom, no bounds nor limits: as will appear, if you do but attend to this general Deſcription of it out of the Holy Writings. In whoſe ſtyle it is moſt certain it ſignifieth, *a full and conſtant enjoyment of all the happineſs that our Being is capable to receive.* I ſay *Happineſs*, becauſe as DEATH in the Sacred language denotes all manner of Miſery, affliction and trouble; ſo by LIFE it expreſſes all kind of Felicity, pleaſure and contentment. And I ſay *full and conſtant* happineſs, becauſe the word ETERNALL muſt needs adde ſomething to the other; and that is compleatneſs, firmneſs and ſolidity. As *Death*, if it be not *eternall*, leaves ſome room for thoughts of happineſs: ſo *Life*, if it want that addition, doth not exclude all vexation and ſadneſs. But then, on the contrary, both the one and the other, if this be annexed, are made perfect;

perfect; without any hope of happineſs in that *Death*, or any fear of miſery in this *Life*.

To clear our paſſage, I judge it neceſſary to ſpend a few words in making good this Notion of *Life* and *Death*, by producing ſome places of Holy Writ, where they are ſo uſed. And firſt, for DEATH, the very firſt time we meet with it in God's Book, it is uſed to expreſs all the Miſery that man drew upon himſelf by his Sin. ii. *Gen.* 17. *In the day thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die*; i. e. fall into a moſt calamitous eſtate, (as it is explained iii. *Gen.* 16, 17, 18, 19.) till worn out with labour, ſorrow and pain, he returned to the duſt out of which he was taken. Thus when the Locuſts came upon the land of *Egypt*, and deſtroyed every green thing, *Pharaoh* intreats *Moſes* (x. *Exod.* 17.) to pray to the Lord that he would take away *this Death onely*. Which ſhews, that all the plagues and diſaſters which fell upon that land; went under this general name of DEATH; though now it be reſtrained to the laſt and greateſt of all puniſhments. The like you reade in the ſecond Book of the *Kings*, (iv. 40.)

where the ſons of the Prophets, as they were eating of their pottage, cry out, *O man of God, there is* DEATH *in the pot*; ſomething that is very diſtaſtfull to the palate, and perhaps hurtfull and poiſonous to the body, which made them they could not eat it. In the New Teſtament alſo (penned by men of the ſame country) we find the very ſame language; St. *Paul* ſaying that he was in *Deaths often*, (2 *Cor.* xi. 23.) and that he *died daily*, (1 *Cor.* xv. 31.) and wiſhing to be delivered from the *body of this Death*; (vii. *Rom.* 24.) *i. e.* of ſuch miſery, that it made him ſigh and groan ſorely under the burthen of it. And to name no more, the *Shadow of Death* in theſe Books ſignifies nothing elſe but an horrible, dangerous place; or a diſmall forlorn condition, into which any miſerable perſon is faln.

This being the notion then of the word DEATH in the ſpeech of the *Hebrews*, ſuch muſt be the ſignification of the word LIFE which is oppoſite to it; whereby they expreſs all Felicity and comfortable enjoyments. Thus when *David* ſays, his enemies were *lively* or *living*, (as it is in the *Hebrew* text,

xxxviii. *Pſal.* 19.) he means, they were in a flouriſhing proſperous condition, abounding with all worldly goods; while he was abandoned to contempt, poverty, and continual danger. And when he ſays, their *heart ſhall live that ſeek God*, (lxix. *Pſal.* 32.) his meaning is, they ſhall enjoy true peace and contentment. So when the people ſay, (2 *King.* xi. 12.) *Let the King live*, which we render, *God ſave the King*, they wiſh him a proſperous and happy reign. And when *David* acknowledges God to be the *fountain of life*, (xxxvi. *Pſal.* 9.) it is as much as to ſay, an ever-running ſpring of all felicity, from whom flows, as the foregoing words are, *a river of pleaſures.* Hence they are bid to keep to God's Commandments *as their life*, (xxxii. *Deut.* 47.) And this is ſaid to be the excellency of knowledge, *that wiſedom giveth LIFE to them that have it*, (vii. *Eccles.* 12.) becauſe by obſerving thoſe wiſe precepts, they were put into a moſt happy condition; which could not be had by any other means, but would certainly be loſt by turning from thoſe holy paths. This is a phraſe ſo known, and the tranſlation of the word to this uſe (ſaith * *Maimonides*) is ſo frequent, that all good and wholſome

* *More Nev. par.* 1. *c.* 42.

wholſome Doctrine is called *Chajah*, that is, LIFE: and thence our Maſters ſay, *The juſt are called* LIVING *even in their death, and the wicked are called* DEAD *even while they are alive*; becauſe the one were happy, and the other miſerable, in thoſe contrary conditions.

The true reaſon of which dialect or manner of ſpeech I take to be this: that LIFE being the foundation upon which all felicity is built, the root out of which it grows, (it being impoſſible to enjoy any thing unleſs we be alive,) and it abiding and continuing alſo, when the pleaſures and other circumſtances of life are often interrupted; it was thought the apteſt thing to expreſs that felicity which we partake of in life, yea the fulleſt felicity, the fruition of the compleateſt Good, when life ſhall be made eternal. And if this be not ſufficient to demonſtrate that the Holy Writers intend by *Eternal Life*, all the good we are or ſhall be capable to enjoy; you may farther obſerve, that they deſcribe it by all things that are excellent and deſirable, having borrowed from the glory of the whole World whatſoever is lovely and illuſtrious, to help to repreſent it

it to us. Shall I put together the ſeverall lines whereby it is deſcribed in as handſome an order and compoſure as I can; and ſo leave every one to judge of the rare beauty of this *Life*, when it ſhall have all its fillings up, which in its ruder draught appears ſo amiable in our eyes?

This LIFE then, that it may be underſtood to be the enjoyment of a fuller good then we can conceive, a good beyond the bold deſires of the moſt inlarged and luxurious appetite, is expreſſed by the hugeſt heaps of *Treaſures*; (ſuch as the Heavens onely are great enough to contain;) by the poſſeſſion of an *immortall Inheritance* reſerved there for us; and by *Pearls* and Jewels of a price ſo invaluable, that he is ſtupid who ſells not all he hath, if they are not to be had at a lower rate, to make a purchace of them. Theſe expreſſions and the reſt that follow are ſo well known, that I need not ſtay to ſet down the particular places of Holy Scripture where they may be found; but proceed to tell you, that this *Life* is there alſo ſet forth, by feeding upon the delight of the moſt exquiſite *pleaſures*, and being entertained with-

without any ſatiety, and in the moſt noble *company*, at the moſt ſumptuous *Feaſt:* by exaltation withall to the ſublimeſt pitch of *Honour*; ſuch as the power of *Kings*, the majeſty of *Thrones*, and the glory of *Crowns*; which Holy men call in to their aſſiſtence, that they may ſerve to lift up our minds to conceive the height of this happy Life, and make it ſeem the more royal and magnificent.

To which you may adde, that they make uſe of the names of *Reſt*, and *Refreſhment*, and *Peace*, and *Joy* or Contentment. For as we reade of *entring into Life*; ſo we do of *entring into Reſt*, and *into the Joy of our Lord*, and *dwelling in Peace:* becauſe theſe are the onely things on earth which can compleat and perfect the happineſs of thoſe who enjoy Princely dignity and power.

But then, when the Earth can afford no more colours for the drawing a picture of this moſt excellent Life, or ſupreme Felicity, thoſe Holy men aſcend up to Heaven, and fetch from thence, not onely ſome rays of light, but the very Sun it ſelf, and that in the top of its glory, to illuſtrate by its brightneſs the incomparable

parable beauty of it. For it is called the *Inheritance of the Saints in light*; and our Bleſſed Lord is called the *Light of the world*; who promiſes the Juſt, that they ſhall have the *Light of life*, and *ſhine like the Sun in the Kingdom of the Father.*

But, alas! it is not in the power of ſuch words as theſe to expreſs its excellence. And therefore, when all things that fall under our eyes and our taſte are ſpent in the deſcription of it, we reade then of melodious *Songs and Thanksgivings*, and the joyfull voice of thoſe who triumph continually. Nay, the whole World, as big as it is, is introduced as a ſmall reſemblance of this Happineſs; wherein victorious Souls are ſaid to *inherit all things*, and to be made *equal to the Angels*; who joyn in conſort with them, and bear their part in thoſe heavenly Anthems and Hymns, wherewith they bleſs and praiſe the Great Lord of all.

But if all the goodly things that are or ever have been in the whole world ſhould meet together, and falling down at the feet of one man, ſhould, with a joynt

joynt conſent, conſpire to make him happy, they could never advance him near the height of this celeſtial Bliſs, whoſe incomparable excellence cannot be expreſſed, without the aſſiſtence of words called down from the higheſt Heavens, the place of God's Habitation. And therefore nothing below *the Kingdom of Heaven*, *a Manſion in our heavenly Father's Houſe*, *a Building of God in the Heavens*, is made the portion of ſuch happy Souls. And as if the Heavens, yea the Heaven of Heavens, could afford nothing great enough to repreſent this Bleſſedneſs; Holy men lead us, at laſt, to *God* himſelf; whom they bid us behold in the High and Holy place, as in his Chamber of Preſence. And this LIFE is called *Seeing GOD*, and *beholding his Glory*, and *being with our LORD*: which are names of ſuch tranſcendent greatneſs, that we had need enjoy this Happineſs, to underſtand them.

But thus the Men of God, from things ſenſible, lead us by the hand to thoſe that are ſpirituall and inviſible. And now that they have placed our thoughts in the preſence of God, there they leave them

them to take as full a view as they can of him, and to ſpread themſelves in the largeſt contemplations of his Perfections. For they were not able to go any farther, then onely to tell us, that we ſhall be *made like to him*, whoſe Perfections ſhine ſo glorioufly in our eyes. This is the higheſt pitch to which they carry our meditations. Here they bid us reſt our thoughts; and now that they have advanced them above the Earth and Heavens, to conſider with our ſelves what it is to *See God*, till we reſemble him, and be perfectly transform'd into his moſt bleſſed Nature and Life. All they can doe more for us, is onely to tell us what GOD is, the enjoyment of whom is our Happineſs: and who, we are to underſtand, will be infinitely far more to our whole man, then Kingdoms and Thrones, then Crowns and Jewels, then Feaſts and Songs, then the Sun it ſelf and all the ſweet influences of Heaven, with the reſt of the things forementioned, could be, were they all united in one deſign to make us happy.

The wiſeſt of the *Jews*, as blind as that Nation is, are ſenſible of this; how diſproportionable all the words, which even

even divinely-inspired persons use, are to the Nobleness of this Life. In which, *Cap. viii. de Pœnitent.* saith *Maimonides*, "there is no room for "meat and drink and such like plea-"sures; but the just sit with Crowns on "their heads, and delight themselves in "the *Splendour of the Divine Majesty*—. "There are many names whereby this "Life is called (*Derech Mashal*) after "the figurative way of speaking in the "Holy Books. For example, *the Moun-"tain of the Lord*; *the place of his Ho-"liness*; *the Courts of the Lord*; *the "Beauty or Sweetness of the Lord*; *the "Tabernacle of God*; *the House of God*; "*his holy Temple*; *the Gate of the Lord.* "And after the same way of similitude "and figurative speech, Wise men call "this Good prepared for the Just, by the "name of a *Banquet* or *Feast*; and most "commonly, *the World to come.* Let not "this Good seem light to thee, nor do "thou imagine the reward of Piety to "be so little, as to drink the richest "wines, to eat the best victuals, to have "the most beautifull wives, to be cloa-"thed in silk and scarlet, to dwell in "ivory palaces, and to have all the fur-"niture of gold and silver and such like "things. But understand that there is "no

"no Good in this world to which that "ſupreme Good can be compared, but "onely by way of figure and ſimilitude. "In truth, there is no proportion be-"tween the Good of the Soul in the o-"ther World, and the Goods of the Bo-"dy, ſuch as meat and drink, in this. "But that Great Good is incomprehen-"ſible and incomparable, according to "thoſe words of *David*, xxxi. *Pſal.* 19. "*O how great good haſt thou laid up for* "*thoſe that fear thee!* He could not tell "how great: but with what deſire did he "long after the life of that world, when "he ſaid, xxvii. *Pſal.* 13. *I believe to ſee* "*the goodneſs of the Lord in the land of* "*the living?* That's another name where-by they called this place of Bliſs. For whereſoever their ancient Wiſe men (ſaith their Myſticall expoſition of the Pſalms) meet with this phraſe in Scripture, *the land of the living*, they expound it of Paradiſe, becauſe *that is the country where men live for ever.*

Manaſſeh Ben Iſr. *Probl.* xvii. *de Creatione.*

But there are no words like thoſe of our Bleſſed Lord to repreſent this ſurpaſſing Happineſs of the pure in heart, who he promiſes ſhall SEE GOD. Let us therefore here fix our minds, and

ſtay a while, before we paſs on any farther, to ſearch into the meaning of this phraſe, which is the ſublimeſt and moſt comprehenſive of all other, whereby this ETERNALL LIFE is deſcribed to us.

I.

And the leaſt that can be meant by it is, that we ſhall be there where He hath his moſt ſpecial reſidence, and ſhall dwell in his Houſe in the Heavens, where there are ſo *many Manſions*. There the Angels are ſaid to *ſtand* before God, to *behold the face* of our heavenly Father: And therefore for us to *ſee GOD*, or behold him, muſt in generall denote, that we ſhall be more like Angels then Men; and being admitted into the ſociety of thoſe heavenly Miniſters, ſhall take up our habitation in the ſame place where they wait upon the Divine Majeſty. Whence it is, that as the Angels are called the *Sons of God*, (i. *Job* 6. ii. 1.) ſo are all thoſe who ſhall be *accounted worthy to obtain that World, and the Reſurrection of the Dead*, xx. *Luk.* 35. We are *now the Sons of GOD*, ſaith St. *John*, 1. Epiſt. iii. 1, 2. in a ſtate, that is,

of

of great favour with him; and therefore need not care if *the world hate us*: But we have far greater things in hope, and look for a more excellent relation to him; it *not appearing yet what we ſhall be.* The meaning of which laſt words, in all probability, is this; that the manner wherein we ſhall be the *Sons of God* in the other world, is not now manifeſt. There is no body knows how near we ſhall be to him, when we ſhall be *the Children of God, being the children of the Reſurrection*; as our Saviour ſpeaks in the place before mentioned. Onely this is certain, as I ſaid juſt now, that we ſhall be Companions of Angels, and ſuch *Sons of God* as they are: And withall St. *John* here tells us that, *when He* (or *it*) *ſhall appear*, we *ſhall be like him*; it being naturall, that the Child ſhould bear ſome reſemblance to its Father.

II.

Now from hence it follows, that to SEE GOD is to enjoy ſuch favours as He will be pleaſed to impart unto us in that high and holy place where he dwells: yea, to have ſome participation with him in his Bleſſedneſs, who is moſt

Bleſſed for evermore. For to *See*, in the language of the *Hebrews*, is *to enjoy*, when it is applied to a thing deſirable; or to be in that ſtate, when it is applied to that which is hurtfull. Thus to *ſee good*, xxxiv. *Pſal.* 12. is to poſſeſs it, and to lead an happy life; and to *ſee the good of Jeruſalem*, cxxviii. 5. is to partake of its peace and proſperity; and to *ſee the goodneſs of the Lord in the land of the living*, xxvii. *Pſalm* 13. is in its firſt ſenſe, to be delivered by God, and to enjoy the ſweet fruits of it before he died. Nor is there any other meaning of *ſeeing life*, and *ſeeing the kingdom of God*, but this, that the parties to whom thoſe promiſes are made ſhall be put into the poſſeſſion of ſuch bleſſings. And, on the other ſide, to *ſee the Son of man ſitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds*, xxvi. *Matth.* 64. is to feel his heavy wrath, the ſtroke of his revengefull hand upon their nation; as may be gathered from i. *Revel.* 7. And to *ſee death*, lxxxix. *Pſal.* 48. ii. *Luk.* 26. is no more then to die. This is ſo plain, that thoſe things that belong to other ſenſes yet are ſaid to be *ſeen*; which can ſignifie nothing elſe, but that they are perceived or enjoyed. *O generation*,

(ſaith

(ſaith *Jeremiah* ii. 31.) *ſee ye the word of the Lord*; that is, hear it, mind and conſider it: or, as *Maimonides* expounds it *, *the intention of the Prophet is, that they ſhould apprehend the ſenſe of God's word.* And that likewiſe which is ſaid to be *ſeen* in one place, is ſaid to be *taſted* in another; as to *ſee death*, viii. *Joh.* 51. is the ſame with *taſting of death*, ver. 52. Which is a demonſtration, that *to See* in their language is frequently uſed for having a ſenſe, perception or enjoyment of any object.

* *More Nev. par. 1. c. 46.*

And therefore we cannot neceſſarily draw any more out of theſe words of our Saviour, which promiſe that we ſhall *ſee God*, but that we ſhall have as reall an enjoyment of him, and as ſenſibly perceive him, as we do now any good in this world; though the manner of it be not certainly known, as not ſo plainly deducible from theſe words. Let us conceive with our ſelves, as well as we can, what his infinite Perfections are, his Wiſedom, his Goodneſs, his Power, his Purity, his Unchangeableneſs, his Immortality and Bliſs; and then make account there will be a lively communication between us and all theſe, which will make

us partakers of his Happineſs. We ſhall not onely enjoy ſuch good things as flow from his greateſt favour and love; but in our meaſure, and according to ſuch capacities as he will give us, be what He himſelf is. Thoſe glorious Perfections of his will impart ſomething of themſelves to us: ſo that we ſhall be like God, and bear ſome ſimilitude to him in Wiſedom, Goodneſs, and Bliſs. We ſhall be filled with Divine joys and pleaſures, by being filled with a great ſenſe of him, and a ſtrong love to him, and a lively reſemblance of his bleſſed Nature, immutably and immortally, without any change and without any end. Thus much we need not doubt is included in this phraſe of *Seeing God*; but confidently believe, that good men ſhall enjoy all the effects of an holy Friendſhip with infinite Goodneſs, and receive ſuch communications from his boundleſs Love, as ſhall make us really and ſubſtantially happy, like as he himſelf is.

III.

And I make no queſtion likewiſe but hereby is ſignified an abundant Felicity which God from his own moſt bleſſed Nature

Nature will impart unto us; a very copious participation of Himſelf, which he will beſtow upon us. For when *Job* ſays, xix. 26, 27. that *in his fleſh he ſhould SEE GOD*, and that *for himſelf, his own eyes beholding him, not another's*; his meaning ſeems to be, that before he died, he was ſure God would deal *exceeding bountifully* with him; not onely reſcuing him from his preſent miſeries, but making him very happy: ſo that he ſhould not onely leave his poſterity, when he was gone, to enjoy the bleſſings which God had ſtill in ſtore for him; but be made in his own perſon partaker of them. Which prediction of his ſeems to have been fulfilled, when it is ſaid, *the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before*, and that *he bleſſed his latter end more then his beginning*: xlii. 10, 12. Then he *ſaw God*, and that with his own eyes, when he was thus liberally bleſſed by him, and received ſuch a large reward of his patience. In like manner, when our Lord ſaith, that pure upright men (like *Job*) ſhall *ſee God*, his meaning may be, that they ſhall in the higheſt degree partake of his bounteous Goodneſs, and receive as much from him above all their thoughts, as Sight is above all other ſenſes.

And indeed the Senſe of *Seeing* is ſo much more ſpacious and wide then the reſt, that we may very well think an exceeding great happineſs is onely able to fill up the whole meaning of this expreſſion, of SEEING GOD. Which may be the better underſtood, perhaps, if we briefly conſider the reaſons for which the Senſe of Seeing ſeems fitter then any other to ſet forth our participation with God in his ſupreme Felicity. They are ſuch as theſe. (1.) It beſt agrees with thoſe things whereby God is repreſented to us in the Holy Scriptures. Where we reade that *God is Light*, (which is the object of ſight onely,) *and in him is no darkneſs at all.* As Light is a thing of which we are moſt ſenſible, and whereby we diſcern indeed all other viſible things, but cannot comprehend what it is: ſuch is God; of whom, if we attend, we cannot but be moſt apprehenſive, and without whom we can enjoy nothing; though we cannot declare the inconceivable purity and excellency of his Nature. And (2.) Sight is the nobleſt Senſe about us; the Eye being a work of more curious and exquiſite contrivance then any other part of our bo-

dy.

dy. And (3.) it is the moſt comprehenſive Senſe, which takes in a vaſt number of things at once; not onely of this lower world, but alſo of the upper. And it is a Senſe (4.) that can longeſt enjoy the ſame object: for its object is not waſted and ſpent in the enjoyment, nor doth it vaniſh and die ſo ſoon as others are apt to do. And (5.) it is the principall Senſe of diſcipline and learning, which conveys to us the firſt notices of things more abundantly then the reſt; and eſpecially helps us to the knowledg we obtain by making experimentall Obſervations. And (6.) it affords us the greateſt certainty and evidence of the truth of things. Inſomuch that we are wont to ſay, *We will believe it, when we ſee it:* and it is become a Rule in Law, that *One Eye-witneſs is better then an hundred Hear-ſay's.* And again (7.) it is a very affecting Senſe, which raiſes paſſions ſooner and quicker then any other. All the Rhetoricall praiſes in the world which are beſtowed to commend a lovely object to us, will not move us ſo much as one glance of its beauty will. The Queen of *Sheba*, you remember, was led by report to come to the Court of *Solomon*; but when ſhe

ſaw

ſaw the ſplendour wherein he lived, then it was, that *there was no more ſpirit in her.* And therefore (laſtly) it brings in the greateſt revenue of the pureſt and moſt long-liv'd pleaſures, by preſenting us with ſuch a vaſt variety of objects, as other Senſes, who have not ſo large a ſphere and compaſs to move in, cannot entertain us withall.

From all which you may eaſily gather, that when our Lord expreſſes the Happineſs of pure and holy Souls by *Seeing God*, he may well be thought to intend thereby, the ſtrong ſenſe that God will give them of himſelf, and the intimate familiarity we may hope to have with the firſt Wiſedom, Purity and Goodneſs: and then the height and dignity of that ſtate to which we ſhall hereby be advanced; together with the vaſt meaſure of knowledg and love which he will communicate to us; the exquiſite and moſt delicious pleaſures which will ſpring from thence, and overflow our Souls; the delightfull paſſions whereby we ſhall be tranſported; and the inconceivable ſatisfaction which we ſhall have within our ſelves. For if St. *Philip* ſaid here, *Lord, ſhew us the Father, and it ſuffices*;

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what ſhall we think of that manifeſtation which he will make of himſelf to us when we ſhall be uncloathed, and have nothing to interpoſe to hinder our clear ſight of him, and full converſe with him? We are not able to conceive how mightily it will affect our hearts. We muſt ſtay till that happy day of our Lord's appearing, to be ſatisfied to what degree of honour and bliſs he intends to promote us: But ſure enough he will come, and not fail our expectation. The Certainty of this happineſs may well be included in our Saviour's promiſe of *Seeing God:* Who will give us a ſure poſſeſſion of himſelf, and undoubted contentment, to the very height, in the enjoyment of him; and that in an endleſs life, without any diſquiet or diſturbance, without alteration or change, without wearineſs or diſguſt; in a never-ceaſing ecſtaſy of joy and delight, to find our ſelves united to him, the Almighty Lord and poſſeſſour of Heaven and Earth, the Fountain of all that is good and amiable in this world, who here entertains us with ſo many pleaſures, that by them we may gueſs what he is able and willing to doe for them, who have no greater care then above all things to pleaſe him.

They

They ſhall be fixed in a ſtedfaſt ſight, that is, enjoyment, of him, to their infinite ſatisfaction.

IV.

And if we mark the words of S. *John*, who ſpeaks this more fully, and tells us, in the place before named, *we ſhall ſee him AS HE IS*, (which he makes the reaſon and cauſe of our being *like him*,) they will imbolden us ſtill to ſeek into a farther meaning of this phraſe. And ſince we can enjoy nothing without a knowledg of it preceding, we are to underſtand, that to *ſee God as he is*, will be to have our minds filled with a knowledg of him, ſo clear, ſo diſtinct and ſtrong, that it will even turn us into his own Nature, Life, and Bliſs. We ſhall not behold, that is, know him, as we do now, by ſimilitudes, reſemblances, and expreſſions borrowed from other things, (which is all our natures are here able to bear;) but by a clear notion of him formed in our minds; wherein our hearts will be infinitely pleaſed, and feel his happineſs come flowing into them.

My

My meaning may be thus explained: As it is an imperfect ſight of a man which we have in a Picture, though drawn by the moſt curious hand and ſtrongeſt fancy; and the man himſelf, if he ſtand before a Looking-glaſs, will in a moment draw an Image more like him, then the skilfulleſt Artiſt can delineate all his life long, eſpecially if he never ſaw the perſon, but onely had a deſcription of him in a book or by report: juſt ſuch is the ſight or knowledg that we have of God in this world, either by his Word, or by his Works, or by the Idea's of our own mind; a very imperfect thing, and much like the picture of a perſon which we never yet had before our eyes. But hereafter, when he will be pleaſed to appear, to give us a more immediate ſight of him, without theſe helps, and preſent himſelf to our mind as the face to a glaſs; this will be to know him indeed, and to *ſee him as he is*. Now as the ſight of a Friend, when he preſents himſelf to the eye, doth marvellouſly refreſh and comfort us; and there is a ſenſe of pleaſure imparted to us in the very beholding a rare beauty, which we are not like perhaps to ſee any more: ſo this *Seeing God*

God is no barren thing, but inſtantly infuſes the higheſt ſatisfaction and delight into pure hearts; who by knowing his bleſſed Nature, will find it imprinting it ſelf (as it were) upon them, and making every one of them to be the bleſſed Image of it. Look what God is, that they by the ſight of him ſhall be: He will dwell in them, as the image of a thing does in the glaſs: And they ſhall be poſſeſſed of him, of his life, of his joys, by having a ſenſible perception of the Wiſedom, the Goodneſs, the Purity, and all the other Perfections that ſhine in himſelf.

V.

Or if this be too hard to be underſtood, let us content our ſelves to know, that to SEE GOD *as he is*, is to enjoy him *as he is in heaven*; that is, according to that manner and meaſure wherein he ſhews and manifeſts himſelf in thoſe celeſtiall places. Pious Souls ſhall really perceive all the effects of his Bounty, Wiſedom and Power, which are known and communicated in that other world. Which as it is higher then this; ſo hath more of God to be ſeen in it,

it, then can be diſcovered here. All that the holy Angels ſee and enjoy of him, all that Good which he lets forth out of himſelf in that glorious place, wherein above all other he is ſaid to be, ſhall be the portion of thoſe happy Souls; who may be ſaid therefore to *ſee him AS HE IS.* They ſhall not enjoy him in ſo low a manner as the higheſt and the moſt highly beloved perſons have enjoyed him in this world, where there is but little of him: but in the nobleſt manner that he can be enjoyed; ſo as the heavenly Miniſters, yea our ever-Bleſſed Lord, are made partakers of him. For when our Lord prays that his Diſciples may *behold* or *ſee his glory*, which the Father had given him, xvii. *Joh.* 24. his meaning is, (according to what I have ſaid of the word *Seeing*,) that they might have their ſhare at laſt with him in his Happineſs, and be admitted to take a part with him in that ſupreme Dignity, to which he was ready to be advanced. And thus when St. *John* invites others into the Chriſtian Society, telling them that *their fellowſhip was with the Father and his Son Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 *Joh.* i. 3. it is as much as to ſay, that they could no-where be ſo happy; becauſe it is the

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ſingular priviledge of Chriſtian people, to be admitted unto a partnerſhip with God and our Saviour in their moſt happy life, and to have hopes and expectation to partake with them in their eternall Bliſs.

VI.

Which may very well give me occaſion to adde, that ſince Grace, Mercy and Peace come to us now from *God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt*; we may hope in this *Viſion of God* to have as well a clear Knowledg of that ever-Bleſſed *Trinity*, as a full communication from their ineffable Love. We ſhall underſtand that Holy Myſtery, which now the ſenſe of our weakneſs forbids us to pry into; and be able, perhaps, to unfold how the *Father, the Son and the Holy Ghoſt is one God, without any diverſity or ſeparation of nature*, (as St. *Auſtin* expreſſes this Myſtery;) which I durſt not, in my former Treatiſe, adventure to explain. For St. *Baſil* had taught me to mark this, in thoſe words of our Saviour, (x. *Joh.* 27. *My ſheep hear my voice,*) that he ſays, ἀκούει, ὐ συζητεῖ, they *hear, not queſtion* or *diſpute. They believe he is the Word of God,*

Epiſt. cxii. ad Paulinam cap. 19.

Homil. de Martyre Mamante.

God, but do not ask how: nor ſay, if he was alway, then he was not begotten; or if he was begotten, then he was not alway. Theſe are not the words of the Sheep of Chriſt: who receive his voice, and enquire no farther. And I had learnt alſo from a great Divine of our own Nation, (to whoſe grave judgment I thought there was a greater veneration due, then to the little forward Cenſurers of this Age,) that the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity is an Argument more *fit for Meditation, in Prayers and Soliloquies, then for Controverſie, or Scholaſtick Diſcourſe.* We believe one Divine Nature in three Perſons: and that the Divine Nature in the Perſon of the *Father* required Satisfaction for the Tranſgreſſions of men againſt his Holy Laws; and that the ſame Divine Nature in the Perſon of the *Son* undertook to make Satisfaction for us, in taking our Nature on him, whereby he had by right of Conſanguinity the authority and power of redeeming us; and the ſame Divine Nature in the Perſon of the *Holy Ghoſt* doth approve and ſeal, as he ſpeaks, this happy and ever-bleſſed compromiſe. *But what it is to be a Perſon, and what manner of diſtinction is between the Perſons in the Bleſſed Trinity,*

D. Jackſon *Pref. to Cathol. Church.*

Knowledge of Jesus Christ, *Chap.* xxv.

are points, saith he, *which I never had a mind to dispute after the manner of the Schools, but was always ready to admire, what I knew not to express.*

For what is it that we can say of God, who can conceive so little of him? It is an ancient saying of *Plato*, that *to conceive God, is difficult; to express him, is impossible.* But he should rather have said, in the opinion of a greater man, Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 34. Θεὸν μὲν ἀδύνατον, νοῆσαι δὲ ἀδυνατώτερον, *It is impossible to express him, and more impossible to conceive him.* "For that which we "can conceive in our mind, we may "declare in words; if not indifferently "well, yet at least obscurely; provided "they that hear us are not dull of un- "derstanding: But to comprehend in "our mind so great a thing as God, is ut- "terly impossible; not onely to the dull "and stupid, ἀλλὰ τοῖς λίαν ὑψηλοῖς καὶ φιλοθέοις, "but to the most sublime Souls, and "those who are lovers of God. Alas! "all that comes to us from him now, is "but onely a short glance, καὶ οἷον μικράν τινα μικρὸν ἀπαύγασμα, and as it were *a little beam of a great Light.* We may call it *a full knowledge* of the Blessed Trinity, (as *Origen* * doth) when we can say,

Ib p. 548. * *In* vi. *Rom.* p. 633. and see Greg. Nazian. *Orat.* 36. p. 594.

The

The Father is Light, and in his Light, which is the Son, we see Light, the Holy Ghost. But how far short is this of what we long to know of these *Three in One?* How much are we in the dark still? And what a satisfaction will it therefore be, to see them clearly shining on us, and discovering their Blessed Nature to us? which hitherto no man hath been able to find out, and whether ever any shall find, let those inquire who have a mind.

"In my opinion, saith the forenamed "Father, then we shall find, when this "Divine, this God-like thing, our Mind "and Reason, shall be intimately joyned "with its heavenly kindred, and the I-"mage shall return to its Archetype or "originall Patern, of whose acquain-"tance it is now so desirous. And this seems to me to be that which is so much discoursed of, *to know as we are known.* Greg. Naz. *ibid.*

Now we *know onely in part*, saith St. *Paul*, (to whose words he hath respect, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 11, 12.) we behold rather the *images* of things, then the things themselves; and those also but *darkly*, and in a cloud: but then we shall *see face to face*, and behold God so clearly, that we shall know him as he knows us.

" He hath a double knowledge, ſays *Elias Cretenſis* upon thoſe words of *Nazianzen:* " one whereby he ſimply knows " all things; and another whereby he " knows his own Image, when it is not " quite ſpoil'd, which is accompanied " with love and delight. And in this latter ſenſe *Gregory* here underſtands it. " For look how much ſerenity and ſhi- " neſs, void of all perturbation, God " beholds in his own Image; ſo much " of his knowledge will he beſtow up- " on it: giving to every one a meaſure " of illumination anſwerable to its puri- " ty and holineſs. Then we may hope to diſcover thoſe things which are Se- crets now; and no more underſtood by us, then a Child underſtands the thoughts of the wiſeſt men. For if St. *Paul* him- ſelf (as St. *Chryſoſtome* diſcourſes upon thoſe words,) he who knew ſo much compares himſelf to an infant while he was in this ſtate; what may we think of our ſelves? how childiſh are our thoughts? and how like children do we ſpeak about Divine matters? eſpecially of the tranſcendent Nature of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt? But how reſplendent then muſt the conception be of our grown eſtate, ſince in this infant

cy of knowledge God hath revealed ſo much of himſelf to us, beyond the thoughts of former times? If theſe things be ſo bright which we ſee now but in a glaſs, and obſcurely too; think what the ſight of the face will be. And the better to underſtand this difference, and to dart a ray of light, ſaith he, though but duskiſh, into thy mind, look upon thoſe things under the Law now that Grace ſhines. Before Grace came, they appear'd great and wonderfull: but hear now what S. *Paul* ſaith of them after Grace, 2 *Cor.* iii. 10. that *even thoſe glorious things had no glory, in this reſpect, by reaſon of the glory that excelleth.* Such is the difference between the knowledg we now have, and that which we ſhall have hereafter: even what we ſee of God here, though, as S. *Paul* ſays, ſo exceeding glorious, hath no light in it, in this reſpect, by reaſon of that light which tranſcendeth. And therefore if our Saviour pronounced his Diſciples bleſſed, becauſe their eyes ſaw, and their ears heard ſuch things as the old Prophets and juſt men had long'd to ſee and hear, but could not attain that happineſs: how much more bleſſed ſhall we find our ſelves, when we come to ſee

things as much beyond what is now manifested, as this Revelation is beyond the ignorance of former Ages? We shall both wonder at our childish presumption, in offering to talk of things so much above our reach: and wonder at the grace of the ever-blessed Trinity, which hath conducted us notwithstanding to the sight of their undivided Glory.

VII.

But it is time to put an end to this; and therefore I shall say no more of this promise of being so happy as to SEE GOD, but that there is a sense to be made of it which will admit the Body, as well as the Soul, to a share with him in those supreme Felicities. For when an exceeding great Splendour, beyond any created Light, appeared to Holy men in ancient times, they called it by the name of *God*; (who was hereby represented to be present with them;) and the beholding this is called *Seeing God*. As when *Moses* saw the Bush in a flame, and from thence a light broke forth at noon-day (as *Greg. Nyssen* speaks) ὑπὲρ τὴν μεσημβρινὴν φῶς, brighter then that

De vita Mosis p. 172.

of

of the Sun, we reade that he thought of approaching to behold with his eyes the wonder of that light; but, which was more wonderfull, (as the ſame Father goes on,) he had his ears illuminated with its beams, καὶ ἡ τῆς φωνῆς ἐκείνης φωνὴ and the voice of that light forbad him to come near the mountain. Whereupon he preſently apprehended that there was a Divine Preſence in the Buſh; and it is ſaid, *He hid his face*, (out of reverence and a holy dread,) *and was afraid to look upon God*, iii. *Exod.* 6. Thence this Mountain is called the *mount of God*, v. 1. and xviii. 5. from this glorious preſence here; which appeared afterward alſo to give the Law from the ſame place. After which you find that he, and *Aaron* with his ſons, and the ſeventy Elders of *Iſrael*, being invited by God to approach towards the foot of that Mount where he ſpake with *Moſes*, it is ſaid that *they ſaw the God of Iſrael*, xxiv. *Exod.* 10. In both which places, though *Maimonides* would willingly underſtand a ſpirituall ſight of God with the mind, (being afraid leſt any man ſhould imagine God to be corporeall;) yet he acknowledges it is ſafe enough to interpret it as the *Chaldee* doth,

More Nevoc. part. 1. cap. 5.

doth, of a ſight of that *Glory* which I treated of in my former Book, (Chap. IV.) or of an *Angel*, which in a luminous Body appeared to them.

But this laſt is rejected by a Rule in the *Talmud* * where this very place laſt named is explained. It is this: *He that interprets a verſe of Holy Scripture always according to the literall ſound, is a Liar; and he that addeth to it, is a Blaſphemer. As for example, when it is ſaid, they SAW THE GOD of Iſrael; if any body interpret it literally, he is a Liar, for the God of Iſrael cannot be ſeen: And if any one adde, that they ſaw the Angel of God, he blaſphemouſly gives the honour of God to Angels. The Chaldee onely is in the right, who ſays, They ſaw the GLORY of the God of Iſrael.* And ſo S. *Cyrill* of *Alexandria* underſtood it, in the like caſe, when he obſerves, the people were brought to Mount *Sinai* that they might be both *Auditours and Spectatours of God*, ἤγαγεν τῆς θείας ἀυτῆ καὶ ἀπορρήτου δόξης, *or of his Divine and ſecret Glory.* Which, having never been ſeen out of the Secret place, made now a moſt illuſtrious appearance; and at the bottom of it (called *his feet*) there was a *pavement* (on which

* *Tit. Kid. dushinc.* 11.

L. 3. *Glaphy. in Exod.*

which the Glory ſtood) very bright, and becoming the *Majeſty* that was upon it. For the Text ſays, it was *like a Sapphire-ſtone, and as clear as the pureſt and ſereneſt ſky.* A token, I ſuppoſe, of the Divine favour towards them; which the clearneſs of the Heavens very well repreſented, as clouds and darkneſs were ſigns of God's diſpleaſure. And accordingly it follows, (v. 11.) that he *did not lay his hand upon the nobles of Iſrael*; i. e. did not hurt them: (though the common opinion was, that if men ſaw ſuch a ſight, they ſhould die preſently.) No, ſo far were they from receiving any harm by it, that they did not merely *ſee God*, but alſo *eat and drink* of the reliques of the Sacrifices that had been (v. 5.) newly offered to him. He entertain'd them with proviſion taken from his own Table; and they feaſted with his *Majeſty*, to their great joy and ſatisfaction.

Such a *Glory*, I told you, S. *Stephen* ſaw, when his perſecutours were going to ſtone him. And it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that, in ſome part of the Heavens, God now manifeſts himſelf in a moſt glorious viſible Majeſty, to the exceeding

ceeding ineffable joy (not terrour and affrightment) of those who shall be admitted to approach to that *Light*, which is now *inaccessible*. So that this will be a part of our eternall happiness, to live in those pure clear Regions, where unknown Glories and most splendid magnificent sights will present themselves to us: where we our selves shall be cloathed with a brightness like that wherein our Lord appeared to S. *Stephen* and S. *Paul*; and behold him in a greater Majesty and brightness then that was, because our capacities will be inlarged to make room for more illustrious manifestations of God to us. We shall live in that place, (as was said before) where *he dwells in light unapproachable* by mortall men; in the company of the holy Angels, who, as so many Stars of glory, will add, if it be possible, to the splendour of that place; and with our Blessed Saviour, *God-Man*, whose glorified Body we shall behold. And so behold it, that we shall *bear the image of the heavenly, as we have born the image of the earthy*. We shall be made immortall, that is, we shall be *ever with the Lord*, in such glorious Bodies as his is: so that in our selves we may see the Glory of God.

For

For it muſt be noted here, that though our Happineſs will begin when our Spirits depart this life; yet it will not be perfected till the Son of God ſhall come the ſecond time to raiſe our bodies out of the duſt, that they may have a part with our Souls in a never-dying Life. Till then, the Happineſs I ſpeak of, it muſt be confeſſed, will not have its Crown or utmoſt Conſummation. But yet the Soul in the mean time (I ſhall prove in its proper place) doth not lie aſleep, nor hath all its Powers bound up in a cold and lethargick dulneſs; though it have not attain'd the utmoſt enjoyment of that Good for which it hopes. Our Saviour ſeems to make theſe two diſtinct things; the putting us in poſſeſſion of everlaſting life, and the raiſing us up at the laſt day. vi. *Joh.* 40. *This is the will of him that ſent me, that every one which ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, may* HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE, *and I will* RAISE HIM UP *at the laſt day:* which he repeats again v. 54. The former of which expreſſions may well denote the comfortable Hope we have of Happineſs, when Soul and Body ſhall be untied; and the other, the

the perfection of this Happineſs, when they ſhall be again united. We ſhall enter into a great part of Felicity, when we quit theſe Earthly Tabernacles; our Souls ſhall then feel themſelves alive, and alive in the midſt of thoſe delights that will ſtill increaſe and never have any end: and they ſhall joyfully expect the Reſurrection of the dead, and the Glory wherein our Saviour ſhall then appear, and all his Saints together with him; who having received *abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in life by Jeſus Chriſt.*

Thus I have ſaid a little concerning this great promiſe of *SEEING GOD*; and it is ſo little, that I feel my ſelf unſatisfied, and would fain penetrate farther, or at leaſt ſpeak more diſtinctly of this *ETERNALL LIFE.* But this ſmall glance we have had of it may well awaken our Souls, and excite them in the worſt condition here to burſt out into thoſe words, which the Authour of the Commentaries upon *Job* (under the name of *Origen*) puts into that Holy man's mouth.

Lib. I. *p.* 448, 449.

Thither will I go, where the Tabernacles of

of the Righteous are, where are the Glories of the Saints, where is the Reſt of the Faithful, where is the Conſolation of the Godly, where is the Inheritance of the Mercifull, where is the Bleſſedneſs of the Undefiled. Thither will I goe, where Light and Life dwells, where Glory and Mirth, where Gladneſs and Exultation inhabit; from whence Grief, Sadneſs and Sighing fly away; where the former Tribulations, which afflict the Body upon this Earth, are no more remembred. Thither will I goe, where we ſhall lay down our Troubles, where we ſhall have a reward of our Labours; where is the Boſome of Abraham, where the Propriety of Iſaac, where the Familiarity of Iſrael; where are the Souls of the Saints, where the Quires of Angels, where the Voices of Archangels; where is the Illumination of the Holy Ghoſt, where the Kingdome of Chriſt, where the never-ending Glory, and the bleſſed Sight of the Eternall God the Father. Thither will I go, there I hope to arrive: not complaining, not finding fault, much leſs curſing and blaſpheming; but bleſſing and praiſing, and with giving of thanks, ſaying, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleaſed the Lord, ſo it is come to paſs. Whatſoever pleaſes God is good;

what-

whatsoever pleases him is just. It pleased him to give; his pleasure was good: it pleased him to take away; his pleasure was just. All that the Lord wills is Life, is Light, is Rest and Peace, is eternall Blessedness. Whatsoever pleases the Lord therefore, whether to inrich or to impoverish, all is incorruptible and endless Bliss. Blessed is the man, O Lord, whom thou chastenest. As pleases the Lord, so it is: Let the Name of the Lord be blessed world without End. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

A more particular Diſcourſe of this LIFE.

THERE is the greateſt Reaſon that all Chriſtians, as the ſame Authour goes on, *ſhould ſay and doe and think thus in all circumſtances, and in all things that occurre*; and ſay ſo with the devouteſt, the moſt humble and chearfull Submiſſion to him: ſince it is the will and pleaſure, you heard juſt now, of this Great Lord, that his Son *Jeſus* ſhould give us, after our ſhort labours or ſufferings here, *Everlaſting Life.* The very name of which ſounds ſo delightfully, that we cannot well preſently ceaſe to ſpeak of it; nor chuſe but deſire to be better acquainted, if it be poſſible, with ſo tranſcendent a Bliſs. It concerns us more then any thing elſe to underſtand it, and to be ſure of it: For the Hope of it is our Refuge, the Anchour, the Stay, yea the Joy and comfort of our hearts.

hearts. And therefore, for the ſake of thoſe who deſire to be led into a more particular knowledge of this Happineſs, I ſhall venture ſomething farther in the deſcription of it: and know not how to conduct them better in this enquiry, then by explaining, as clearly as I can, theſe two words, LIFE, and the ETERNALL duration of it.

And if the nature of the *Firſt* be examined, you will find, that LIFE is nothing elſe but the exerciſe of all thoſe faculties and powers, which are proper and peculiar to us, upon their true and naturall objects. Whence it is that wicked men are ſaid, in the Sacred ſtyle, to be *dead*; becauſe nothing that is reaſonable, nothing that conſtitutes the form of a man, acts in them: and on the other ſide, they that are converted from Vice to Vertue are ſaid to be made *alive*; becauſe ſuch perſons onely imploy and make uſe of all thoſe powers which belong to reaſonable creatures, and have devoted themſelves to the beſt improvement of them. There is in a man, as *Philo* excellently expreſſes it, φιλάρεσκον καὶ φιλόθεον δόγμα, *a certain notion and ſenſe that loves God, and is a friend to Vertue:* which when

περὶ τὸ τῆς χάριτος, &c.

when it is extinguiſhed in his Soul, the man is dead; and when it is revived, he is then again made alive. Since therefore St. *John* is ſpeaking of the higheſt *Life* that man is capable of, we are directed by this notion to look upon it as conſiſting in the moſt intended operation of all our Powers, and that in their higheſt improvement, upon the greateſt and nobleſt Good; which we ſaw before is God himſelf.

Let us then conſider, that man conſiſts of *Soul* and *Body* as his eſſential parts; and that the Soul, as the better part, muſt be moſt conſidered in this ſtate of Bliſs; for from it Bliſs will be derived to the Body: and therefore conſider again what the ſeveral Faculties and Operations of our own Souls are; and farther, how much they ſhall be inlarged, and their force increaſed, by the mighty change which ſhall be made in us at death and at the reſurrection; and laſtly, how that all theſe Faculties thus improved, and made bigger then they themſelves can now comprehend, ſhall be filled to the brim with that fulleſt Good: and we ſhall be able to frame in our mind ſome diſtinct apprehenſion of this *bleſſed Life*. Now we all know

there are two Faculties of our Soul, the *Understanding* and the *Will*, upon which all Operations depend: and it is ascertain that the satisfaction and felicity of the Understanding can consist in nothing but in *Knowledge* and contemplation of the *Truth*; and that the happiness of the Will consists in the *Love* of that which is *Good*: And by necessary consequence the utmost satisfaction of both these is in the cleerest Contemplation of the highest Truth, and in the most ardent Love of the highest Good. And therefore every one sees where we must begin to speak of this most Blessed LIFE.

I.

Which consists in the greatest Treasures of Divine Knowledge, by the contemplation of the fairest Object; which is the exercise of the prime Faculty in man, and the good of his Soul, as it is rationall. For the better understanding of which let us consider, (1.) that the Soul in it self is apt to receive the notice of all manner of things: as we may easily discern, if we do observe, how things most contrary in themselves can agree to lodge together in our Mind; and we behold

hold them one after another, or both together, without any diſturbance, yea with abundance of pleaſure. But, (2.) whatſoever our capacity now is, we find it is very little that we actually know, by reaſon of many impediments that we are clogg'd withall. And yet that little, when we are maſters of any notion, communicates ſo much pleaſure to us, that we are hugely deſirous of having our minds enlarged to know more; and think it neceſſary to our happineſs, that we ſhould be put into a condition of more free and undiſturbed converſe with Truth. When therefore (3.) we ſhall be rid of this clog, being either alone without this body, or having it made ſo ſpiritual, that it will be under abſolute command, and when we ſhall be in a ſtill and quiet place, and enjoy perfect ſettlement of mind and peace of conſcience, (the want of which is the onely thing conceivable to diſturb an uncloathed Soul in its contemplations,) we may reaſonably hope to be put into that moſt deſirable condition. But we finding (4.) even in this narrow condition, wherein our Souls are pent up, ſuch an infinite thirſt after Knowledge, that the Mind of man is never ſatisfied; we may gueſs by that how

vehement this deſire will grow, when our Souls ſhall be no longer impriſon'd, and their capacities ſo much inlarged. And therefore you may conſider farther, (5.) that if this capacity and this deſire in our Souls be not filled, we ſhall be ſo far from leading an happy life, that we ſhall be more miſerable then we are now; becauſe we ſhall be more able to diſcern our wants. And thence we may conclude that, to make us happy, our Mind ſhall be gratified, and its widened enlarged Faculties filled with a Divine light, proportionable to the power it hath to apprehend.

Well then, (6.) conſidering that all objects are finite, and limited both in their nature and number, except God alone, who contains in his own Being all things that are and can poſſibly be; our Minds will certainly be carried to him, as the onely object that can perfect their Happineſs, by ſatisfying their boundleſs deſire of wiſedom and knowledge. He alone *can* fill thoſe Minds who long to know all things, and who have an aptitude to a vaſter knowledge then now can be conceived. And (7.) who can doubt but he *will* fill them, ſince he hath pro-

promiſed, as you have heard, by our Saviour, that the *pure in heart ſhall ſee him?* that is, know him and contemplate him in that Eternall LIFE which *Chriſt* hath revealed? For in this our enjoying God muſt begin: and it may well be called SEEING in Scripture, becauſe *Knowledge* to the Mind is the ſame with *Seeing* to the Eyes; and the *Underſtanding* to the Soul is the ſame with the *Eye* to the Body. And (8.) we can as little doubt but that their Souls will be moſt happy who ſhall lead ſuch a Life, which begins in their admiſſion to this bleſſed Sight. The contemplative Life, even in this world, hath been thought by the greateſt Philoſophers to be the moſt excellent, and in a manner Divine; as *Ariſtotle* endeavours to prove by ſeverall Arguments in the concluſion of his *Ethicks*. Now the more excellent the object is which we contemplate, the more excellent is the contemplation it ſelf. From whence he concludes, in another place, that God muſt needs be the moſt Bleſſed, becauſe he perfectly and perpetually contemplates himſelf; whom all acknowledge to be the moſt excellent and perfect object. And ſince the Underſtanding, ſays he, conceives by a kind

Lib. x. *c.* 7, 8.

xii. *Metaphyſ.*

of conjunction with that which it underſtands; ſo that in ſome ſort they are made one; from thence alſo we may argue, that his Contemplation of himſelf muſt needs be the moſt excellent, becauſe it is the moſt intimate, as well as conſtant and never interrupted enjoyment of the moſt excellent Being. The more then our mind can be fixed on God, and the more we underſtand of him, and the nearer we approach to him, the more we ſhall partake of his moſt bleſſed Life; who being moſt intimately One with himſelf, never ceaſes to contemplate his own moſt adorable Perfections.

You will be the more ſenſible of this, if you do but imagine how happy many a man would think himſelf, could he but raiſe his mind to underſtand the wonderfull frame of the World, and diſcover the rare wiſedom that lies hid in the contrivance of every part of ſo goodly a Fabrick. If there be ſuch pleaſure in looking into the curious compoſure of this great Book of the Creatures, and ſearching after all the myſterious learning contained in it, (which employs the ſtudy of innumerable ſouls night and day;) you may eaſily conceive it muſt needs

needs be a moſt ſublime ſatisfaction to know him clearly who is the Authour of this Structure, whoſe Artifice now raviſhes contemplative minds into ſuch admiration. They ſeem to have meant nothing elſe anciently who diſcourſed of the Muſick of the Spheres or celeſtiall Orbs, but the extraordinary pleaſure and delight wherewith the minds of thoſe Philoſophers were ſtruck, who beheld the orderly and gracefull motion of thoſe heavenly bodies. And the ſame men ſaid the Mind of man was an *Harmony*, becauſe of the well-ſet notions whereof it is compoſed, and the ſweet touches that it gives us when it is in tune, and runs into coherent thoughts and orderly ſpeculations. Now look what joy it would be to a contemplative man, if he could know the Art there is in the frame of the Heavens, or if he could but ſo reflect upon his own Soul as to know its nature, all its motions, the ſpring and the manner of them, nay, but to know his own Body, which, as the Pſalmiſt ſays, is ſo *fearfully and wonderfully made*, that it aſtoniſhes our minds when we ſeriouſly think of it; and by this you may judge what an happy life it will be, to be acquainted with God, by whoſe *wiſedom*

the heavens were made, *and all the hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth*, and who *faſhioned all our Souls*, and *curiouſly wrought* all the members of our bodies, where no eye could ſee but onely his own; yea, to know ſo much of him, that ——

But it is not in my power to make you underſtand what this Knowledge ſhall be, for that would be to place you in Heaven. Nay, we cannot conceive how God himſelf ſhould make us know it in this ſtate; unleſs he work a change in us, and cauſe theſe bodily operations to ceaſe. All that I can doe is, to make you underſtand, that our Souls ſhall be enlarged to know more then now we can conceive, and that we ſhall be as inconceivably pleaſed in that knowledge: for the very hope of it now is not without its ſingular pleaſure. You will ask, perhaps, But what is it that we ſhall know of him? Do you tell us of a myſterious Darkneſs, or, which is all one, an inapprehenſible Light? This is but to know that we are ignorant. And who can faſten his heart on things of which he hath no perception? or delight in the thoughts of that with which he hath

no

no acquaintance? I anſwer, We are already acquainted, bleſſed be God, with ſomething of him; though, as I have ſaid before, we *ſee but through a glaſs, darkly*, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. As a glaſs repreſents not the thing it ſelf, but its image; and he that ſees a thing in a glaſs doth not know it immediately from its ſelf, but from its image: ſuch is the knowledge we have of God in this life. We know him by the effects of his Wiſedom, Power, and Goodneſs; and by the revelation he hath made of his Mind and Will in his Goſpel. We know him not immediately and by himſelf; but we know, as it were, an Image of him, in his Works and in his Word. And though this knowledge be but obſcure, and not ſo clear as we deſire; yet ſo much is plainly revealed, that one day we ſhall *ſee him face to face:* that is, we ſhall be more nearly preſent to him, and immediately contemplate him; who is a Mind and Spirit, joyning himſelf to our very Mind by himſelf, and not by an image.

What that is, ſome excellent Souls ſeem alſo to have had a little taſt of here in this world; *by gaſping with the mouth of their heart* (as St. *Auſtin* ſpeaks) *to the* *Confeſ. Lib.* ix. c. 10.

the fountain of Life, that receiving a ſmall ſprinkling from thence, they might perceive after ſome ſort ſo great a thing. For he ſaith, that as he and his Mother were diſcourſing together, a little before ſhe died, of the life of holy Souls in the other world, "they had their thoughts "carried by degrees above all things ſenſible, till they touched it a while with "the whole ſtroke of their heart. And "could we but ſilence the tumult of the "fleſh, could we make all imaginations of "the earth, the air and the heaven it ſelf "lie quiet and ſtill; could the Soul it "ſelf not ſtir, but, by ſilencing its own "thoughts, go beyond it ſelf; could we "but, liſten alone to him that made all "things, and hear him alone ſpeak, not "by them, but by himſelf; ſo that we "heard his word not by a tongue of "fleſh, nor by the voice of an Angel, "nor by the darkneſs of a ſimilitude, but "him whom our Soul loves in all theſe, it "could hear without theſe; (as he and "his Mother then did, when with a ſwift "thought they touched that eternall "Wiſedom, who is over all:) we might "eaſily and ſenſibly perceive what eternall Life is, by ſuch a moment; and "conclude, that if this moment was con-

"tinu-

" tinued, and all other lower ways of " thinking vaniſhing, this alone remai- " ned, it would be no leſs then to *enter* " *into the joy of our Lord.* Thus he and " ſhe diſcourſed, till this World and all " the pleaſures in it were forgotten; and " ſhe cried out, *Son, there is nothing that* " *I delight in in this Life.*

Now the hope we have, that what ſome have felt, for the twinckling of an eye, by an intimate conjunction of their Soul with God, we ſhall all at laſt feel in endleſs life, is a mighty attractive to our hearts; the greateſt of all other, though we cannot reach it here. Therefore the Good we are to enjoy is ſo deſirable, becauſe it is bigger then all our preſent thoughts; and the greatneſs of it is not hid from our eyes, becauſe we ſhould not underſtand it, but becauſe we cannot. What more powerfull argument can there be to move our affections, then the conſideration that, though we know not theſe things, what they are and what the manner of their enjoyment is, yet, we know that they ſhall be known and enjoyed; and we know alſo ſo much of them and of other things, as gives us aſſurance that the fulneſs of that know-

ledge

ledge will be beyond all thought pleasant and delightfull to us? For, (1.) it is now so great a pleasure to the mind, to behold the wisedom which appears in the smallest Mite that creeps on any part of this earth; that we cannot but be sensible the highest perfection of it is, to have any conception of the Wisedom, the Power, the Goodness, the Eternity, Immensity, Truth, Purity and Providence of Almighty God; which the longer we look upon, the more we find our minds inlarged, and their thirst increased. This perfection of pleasure then (2.) cannot but be strangely advanced, when we shall come to *see him face to face*, and to *know him as we are known*: for our thoughts of him in that state, as was said before, will differ as much from our present conceptions, as the understanding of a grown Man doth from that of a Child. And then likewise (3.) we may discover some Divine Perfection of his, which no man ever thought of before. New Beauties may reveal themselves to us, of which we have not now the least notice: because God is A L L, and therefore contains more in his Essence, then we ever framed any Idea or notion of. So that, per-

perhaps, (4.) we ſhall never ceaſe to make ſome new diſcovery or other, but be ſtill beholding more and more of his Glory, to our endleſs ſatisfaction.

Let us but cheriſh ſome ſuch thoughts as theſe, and we ſhall feel preſently, by the incomparable pleaſure wherewith they affect us, how powerfull they are to draw our hearts towards this bleſſed LIFE, and all the ways that lead unto it. It was ſome great delight which they preconceived, that made one Philoſopher put out his eyes, the better to be able to contemplate intellectuall things: and which made another travell all the learned world over, that he might have the converſation of knowing men: and a third live xxii years in the fields, that he might diſcover onely the manners and the workmanſhip of Bees: and a fourth wiſh he could be able to look upon the Sun, to ſee what it is; though he died the next moment after the ſight: and all the wiſe men, to improve their knowing faculties, take ſuch vaſt and incredible pains. Would any man ſo toil his brain as the Mathematician doth, were there not a certain raviſhment in Knowledge ſurpaſſing all ſenſuall delights? How is the

the ſillieſt Soul affected, when you bring it the notice of ſome new thing, of which before it was perfectly ignorant? And all pious hearts how glad are they but to think that they are in the direct path to Heaven? And the ſenſe they have of God ſometimes overſpreading their hearts, how much doth it tranſport them, and make them long to have it continue for ever? And therefore think with your ſelves, if theſe little notions of ſenſible things be ſo ſweet, if a ſmall flaſh of light, that breaks in upon us from Heaven for a moment, be ſo glorious; what will it be to have our minds ſo conſtantly illuminated with the Divineſt knowledge, as the air is with the beams of the Sun? How deſirable is that ſtate, when we ſhall be all ſhining, when our inheritance ſhall be Light, and when we ſhall be able to look upon the noon-day brightneſs?

We all find, that a pure and unſpotted Beauty hath a ſtrange power in it to charm the dulleſt minds. Let us ſuppoſe then, with a modern Philoſopher, that there were a Beauty whoſe colours were ſo radiant and bright, that our eye ſhould not be able to look upon it, without the aſſiſtence of ſome new-found Spectacles; by

by which the luſter of the colours, and the exceeding great purity of its light, might be kept from ſtriking our eye with too piercing a ſplendour. Do you not conceive that, if there were ſuch an object, and ſuch an help to your eye, you ſhould be preſented with a ſight more raviſhing then you ever yet beheld? and that you would deſire never to put off thoſe Spectacles, which fortified your eye to ſee ſo fair a Beauty; unleſs you could hope to have your eye made ſo ſtrong, that of it ſelf it ſhould be able to behold it? Ponder then within your ſelves, that juſt as the pleaſure, in ſuch a caſe, would ariſe together with the excellency of the object, and the increaſed power of the eye; ſo will the delight of ſeeing ſo ſublime an object as God by our raiſed and ſtrengthned Souls, exceed all that which we now perceive in any worldly good, or even in God himſelf. And according to the degree to which our Faculties ſhall be advanced and impowered, which may be as much as God pleaſes, ſo certainly will the fulneſs and the overflowing meaſure of the delight be, which riſes and falls according to the alterations that are in us; for in GOD there is none at all.

To

To all this I have one Conſideration more to adde; that the Soul, as you heard before, by knowledge becomes, in a manner, what it knows: not indeed by being changed into the object, but by receiving the object into it ſelf. As we ſee ſome Bodies admit others ſo intirely into them, that they have all the qualities of the nature which they have aſſumed: (iron, for inſtance, in the fire becomes red, and warms or burns according as other bodies approach it:) ſo our Minds, by the knowledge they have of things, are after a ſort united to them, and partake ſo far of their qualities, that Heaven and Earth do not differ more, then two Souls do, who have fixt their thoughts, the one on Earthly, the other on Heavenly things. And therefore, when we ſhall come to know God face to face, the ſight of him will be nothing leſs then a full poſſeſſion of him, a kind of becoming what he is, in a true and reall, (as Divines ſpeak) though not eſſentiall likeneſs to him, in Wiſedom, Righteouſneſs, Goodneſs, Immortality, and, I may adde, Power too, becauſe we ſhall perfectly command our ſelves, and have our preſent unruly thoughts and affecti-

affections in a due ſubjection to his ſovereign Will. For if, as the Apoſtle ſaith, by beholding now (without a veil, but) in a glaſs the Glory of the Lord *Chriſt*, we are *changed into the ſame Image from glory to glory*, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. then much more, when we ſhall come without the help of words and writings to behold the Face of God himſelf, we ſhall be transformed into his image; and by being aſſimilated to his Divine Nature, be made partakers of the joys and pleaſures which are inſeparable from it.

And if the transfigur'd Humanity of Chriſt (as *Anſelm* * meditates) *in the company of two Saints gave ſuch delight, when it was ſeen but for a point of time; O how great will the pleaſure be of ſeeing the Deity among the Quires of Angels? If* Peter, *beholding the glorified Humanity, was affected with ſuch a joy, that he deſired never to part with that ſight; what ſhall we think of thoſe who ſhall be counted worthy to ſee the Divinity?* We may ask the Queſtion as oft as we pleaſe, but can no more give an Anſwer to it now, then the Diſciples could tell, till they beheld it on the holy Mount, what it was for their Maſter to be transfigured. Then

* *in* Matth. xvii.

we ſhall underſtand it, when we come to the High and Holy place where *Jeſus* is; of which that Mountain was but a figure. For the preſent, we muſt be content, if we can raiſe up our minds to ſome ſmall conceptions of its greatneſs by ſuch conſiderations as theſe. On which I have the longer inſiſted, becauſe they lay the foundation of what follows, and lead our thoughts to the eaſier underſtanding of it.

II.

And if the nature of this LIFE be farther examined, you will find the *Mind* is not the onely Faculty that ſhall be gratified; but the *Will* ſhall conceive a Love as great as the Knowledge of which I have diſcourſed. For as God is the higheſt object of the Underſtanding, being the Prime *Truth*; ſo he is the chiefeſt object of the Will, being the Firſt and Beſt *Good*. And therefore as the Underſtanding ſhall then moſt clearly know him; ſo the Will, in like manner, ſhall moſt ardently love him, and find perfect ſatisfaction in that Love. There is a neceſſary connexion between theſe things; and it cannot be otherwiſe, but that from the

the beſt Good clearly known, there will flow the greateſt Love; drawing along with it the greateſt delight, and the moſt perfect repoſe. And therefore to SEE GOD, virtually contains in its notion both Love and Delectation, with Reſt, or Satisfaction. Love naturally flows from thence, as from its fountain; and the other naturally flow from Love. Which is the higheſt act of that Faculty which we call the Will, as knowing and contemplating is of the Underſtanding. Deſire, indeed, is the firſt Motion of it, when any thing is apprehended to be good for us; but that will there be quenched in poſſeſſion and enjoyment: and no more of it can be conceived to remain, then a longing after the continuance and increaſe of this Happineſs; which, yet, will be ſo certain, that we ſhall be rather confident, then deſirous.

The Will therefore, having ſuch a glorious object always before it, will be wholly imploy'd in Love, and ſpend it ſelf, without any decay, in flames of affection towards this Univerſall Good, which ſhines ſo fairly and brightly in its eyes. It will apply it ſelf to the enjoyment of it with as great a vehemency as

it can; and laying its mouth (as St. *Austin* teaches me to ſpeak) to the Spring of all happineſs, do more then taſte the ſweetneſs of it. We may expect to have it filled with thoſe delicious pleaſures which we know attend on Love; and which in that ſtate will be proportionable to the greatneſs of the Good that is embraced, and to the ſtrength and ardency of the embracement.

And whereas here in this world men are wont to love beyond all reaſon, whereby their love becomes adulterate, and is mixed with ſo many diſcontents that it proves but a bitter-ſweet: There our Underſtanding (as you have heard) will be in its full growth and higheſt pitch; ſo that as nothing which is reaſonable ſhall be omitted to be done, nothing likewiſe ſhall be done that is unreaſonable. This Love will be grounded upon the cleareſt Judgment; this Flame kindled by the pureſt Light: ſo that there will be no unquiet or trouble in it, but perfect reſt and peace.

And whereas in this world mens affections flow to things that are not near ſo big as themſelves, (*i. e.* as their own de-

deſires,) and ſo they languiſh, and faint, and fall ſick, even in the enjoyment of the beſt good that it affords; becauſe they find it is not a ſupply proportionable to their want, or to their expectations: There will be no ſuch emptineſs nor want of ſatisfaction in thoſe celeſtial enjoyments; becauſe we ſhall embrace not onely our proper good, but that which is commenſurate to our deſires, and beyond our hopes. Our Affections will not fall then upon that which cannot ſuſtain the whole weight of them; but feeling themſelves born up to the greateſt height of Love, by a Good ſo full, that it will leave no room for complaint or uneaſineſs, they will enjoy the moſt ſolid Reſt and Satisfaction.

Do but conceive then in your minds what a pleaſure it is here in this Life, to Love and to be Beloved; and you will have ſome notion whereby to take a meaſure of the LIFE we are ſpeaking of, which will conſiſt in ſuch mutuall Love and delightfull Correſpondencies. And they who have neither Father nor Mother, Wife nor Children, near Kindred nor Relations, whereon to place their affection; let them conſider, if they have

but a ſingular Friend, what the pleaſure is that two perſons, who ſincerely and purely love, take in the ſweet company and converſation of each other. Or if I muſt ſuppoſe any man to be ſo unkind and ſo unhappy, as to have no love for any body but his own ſelf, let him think what contentment he hath, and how he is pleaſed, if he can arrive any thing near to a quiet enjoyment of his dear Self. And ſuch a delightfull ſtate may be a ſmall image of Heaven, where holy Souls will love God with a far greater flame, then ever they did (or ſhall then) love themſelves: becauſe He will appear infinitely more lovely, and to bear alſo a far greater love to them, then it is poſſible for them to do to themſelves.

Now none can tell how tranſporting it will be to a good Soul, when it feels it ſelf the Beloved of God, as well as full of love to him: becauſe we cannot think how great the Love of the Almighty is, unleſs we could know how great he is himſelf. This is a thing that cannot fail to have a ſtrange power over our affections, and to maſter them ſo that we ſhall be taken quite out of our ſelves: for we all extreamly love to be beloved.

If

If any neighbour ſhew us an unexpected and undeſerved kindneſs, we are apt to think he is the beſt perſon in the world: And the pooreſt Wretch that is, if we ſee in him the undoubted ſigns of an hearty love to us, we cannot chuſe but requite it with ſome expreſſions of kindneſs back again. Nay, if a Dog, as I have ſaid elſewhere, or ſuch a dumb creature, do but fawn upon us, and delight in our company, and with a great deal of obſervance follow us whereſoever we go; we cannot but be ſo far pleaſed with this inclination towards us, as to make much of it, and to be troubled to ſee any harm befall it, and to love to ſee it play and be well pleaſed. Judge then what a pleaſure it will be to pious Souls, to find themſelves beloved of him, who hath put theſe kind reſentments into our nature. To what an height will the ſweet breathings of his Love blow up the flames of theirs? Into what Ecſtaſies will they fall, when they feel by the happy fruits, what an exceeding great affection their Heavenly Father bears to them? It is above our preſent thoughts to apprehend the joy that will then overflow them: but we may conceive

ceive a little of it, if we remember, that *GOD is Love*; and that by our Love *He will be in us*, and by his Love *we ſhall be in Him.*

But, if you pleaſe, let us fall much lower then this; and onely repreſent to our ſelves, how great an happineſs we ſhall account it, to be beloved of the whole Family of God in Heaven. Look down from the higheſt Angel to the ſmalleſt Infant that ſhall be bleſſed there, from the nobleſt to the meaneſt in that celeſtiall Court; and there is not one of them but will love us, and be ready to ſhew their ſincere and moſt affectionate kindneſs towards us. They that are the greateſt in that Glory, will be the greateſt Lovers; they that enjoy moſt of God, will be diſpoſed to let us enjoy moſt of them. For there is no Pride nor Envy in the heavenly Quire; but the more any are Beloved, the more they will delight in the moſt effectuall expreſſions of their Love. And how can they chuſe but interchange to each other unſpeakable contentment, who live in the comfort of ſuch indiſſoluble Amity and Friendſhip? Nothing can be thought of beyond this to ſet forth their happi-

neſs;

neſs: But we muſt conclude with * *Philo*, that this is *the beſt definition of immortall life*, ἔρωτι καὶ φιλίᾳ θεοῦ ἀσώματῳ καὶ ἀσωμάτῳ κατηγῆσαι, *to be held faſt in an unfleſhly and incorporeall love and friendſhip of God.*

* Περὶ φυγάδων, p. 459.

You will ſay, perhaps, that I have been now ſpeaking of ſome other Love beſides his; which, ſuppoſing our hearts ſo fixed on him, we ſhall not be capable to entertain our ſelves withall in the other world. For who can divert himſelf from ſo beloved a Good, (which ſends alſo ſuch tokens of Love to him,) and turn to any other object? We cannot think that they who love God perfectly, will be inclined to love any thing elſe. And you may think ſo ſtill, if you pleaſe, without any prejudice to what I have ſaid. This will but make that LIFE the more deſirable, and move us to wiſh for ſuch an happy ſtate; where God will be in all our thoughts, and we ſhall always love him, and yet love one another too. For theſe are not at all inconſiſtent, but we may delight our ſelves in the ſweet ſociety of Angels and Saints, and yet always SEE GOD; becauſe we ſee and love Him in every thing. They will be *his* Beauties which we ſhall behold

behold in them. Thoſe holy ones will ſhine in *his* Glory. So that our affections will not incline to run to any perſon merely for himſelf; but becauſe we behold the face of God in him, and ſee his Graces wherewith he is adorned. All the Love there will be Divine: And the more of God ſhall appear in any perſons, the more lovely they will be; and the more we ſhall be raviſht with their company, and rejoyce in a happy league of friendſhip with them.

Well then, withdraw your thoughts a while from all the things you love here, and raiſe them above to look at Love where it reigns, and hath an uncontrolled Empire: Behold it ſitting on its Throne, advanced to its utmoſt pitch of Perfection, and ſhewing it ſelf in its full Glory: And then keep the beginnings of this Heavenly LIFE out of your Souls, if you can. It will be impoſſible you ſhould not think, there is nothing ſo much to be deſired as to be all Love. O happy Life, will you ſay, where they love as much as they are able! and where they ſhall be able to love more then now can be conceived! and where they will be beloved more then they can love;

and

and have their Love hereby heightned, when they reflect upon it, in an endleſs Circle of joy and pleaſure! Let us enter upon this Life with all the ſpeed we can make. Let us begin it this very moment; and endeavour that no moment may paſs hereafter, but in the Love of God. For there is no heart ſo ſtony (ſure) and inſenſible, that will not be diſſolved into fleſh, and receive any impreſſions from God, if it be once touched with the ſerious thoughts of this ſtate of Love. No Soul ſo hard frozen and icy, that will not be thawed and melted to run whether God pleaſes, when it doth but feel the leaſt ſpark of this heavenly Fire fall down upon it. Do but go from the reading of this, with the thoughts of this Happineſs burning in your breaſts, and preſerve the fire, for one hour, from going out: and you cannot imagine, till you try, to what an heavenly temper it will purifie and refine your Spirits. It will make you heartily in love with the Life of *Chriſt* here, which leads to ſuch a bliſsfull Life in the other world. You will zealouſly follow thoſe holy deſires and reſolutions, which you will neceſſarily feel it inſpiring you withall. And you will not ſuffer any temptation whatſoever

ever to divert you from that earneſt purſuit; but ſtill be ſaying, as St. *Auſtin* begins and ends his *Confeſſions:*

Thou, Lord, haſt made us for thee, and our heart is uneaſie and reſtleſs untill it repoſe it ſelf in thee. Who being that Good which needs no good, art always at reſt; for thou thy ſelf art thine own Reſt. But to underſtand this, what man will give to man? what Angel to Angel? or what Angel to man? Let it be askt of thee, let it be ſought in thee, let it be knockt for at thee: So, ſo ſhall it be received, ſo ſhall it be found, ſo ſhall it be opened. Amen.

III.

And the more we think of it, the more we muſt needs ſtill deſire it; becauſe our Underſtanding being filled with the knowledge, and our Will with the love of the chiefeſt Good, we ſhall ſenſibly perceive a Divine joy reſulting from theſe, and flowing into our heart with inexpreſſible pleaſure: For it is eſſentially included in every act both of that Knowledge and that Love, as may be clearly diſcerned by what hath been already ſaid. We are now compounded of

of different, and ſometimes contrary paſſions; which frequently diſquiet us, and diſturb our peace, by falling out with our Reaſon, and with one another. But in that bleſſed LIFE there will be no ſuch troubleſome mixture; no fear, no ſorrow, no hatred, no anger, or any the like, remaining: But joy alone, advanced to the greateſt height of glory, will be left in the poſſeſſion of the whole Soul, and have the ſole Dominion of it to it ſelf. The reaſon is, becauſe we ſhall for ever have the preſence of the greateſt Good; which will exclude the preſence of any evil, to give us the leaſt fear of loſing what we love. That's the originall of all our Paſſions: As we are glad when we enjoy any thing that we love; ſo we are troubled when we want it, or when we loſe it; and we are full of care and ſolicitude when we eagerly purſue it; and riſe up in hatred and diſpleaſure at that which oppoſes our deſires. When Love then is ſecure by the poſſeſſion of that Supreme Good, whom no evill can approach, the cauſe of all other paſſions will be baniſhed; and Joy alone be left to triumph in the conqueſt of them. For which cauſe this heavenly Joy muſt needs be the more

exceſ-

exceſſive, when we ſhall have nothing elſe to do, but to rejoyce. This will mightily increaſe the greatneſs of it, that there will be no employment for the reſt of our Paſſions, which here, whether we will or no, take their turns together with it: and conſequently there will be nothing to diminiſh the greatneſs of it, by any trouble or diſorder that can be given it.

For the proof of which I need onely refer you to the foregoing diſcourſes, and deſire you to reflect upon what you have read of the *Knowledge* and *Love* of God. You could not but obſerve how joy and pleaſure was ſo inſeparably knit to them, and interwoven with them, that I could not well ſpeak of them, but I muſt touch upon this alſo.

1. As for the firſt of them, we all feel a certain complacency which our very Senſes as well as our Underſtanding takes in objects conformable to them; even before our appetite moves at all towards them. *Truly, the light is ſweet*, ſays the Wiſe man, *and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun.* xi. *Eccles.* 7. Look then how much the Divine Light excells

excells all other, and how much the Majeſty and Splendour of the Authour of Nature is beyond the beſt of his Works, the glory and brightneſs of the Sun: and ſo much ſweeter and more pleaſant will it be for our Mind to be filled with that Light, and to behold that firſt and Originall beauty, from whence all other are derived. We cannot *think* of God and of our Saviour now, without a ſingular joy: and therefore we ſhall not be able to S E E them, without an exceſs of it.

2. And, ſecondly, as for Love, Joy is a no leſs neceſſary attendant on it, or rather is intwined with it; being nothing elſe but that delight and pleaſure which ſprings up from the ſenſe of any Good that we have taken poſſeſſion of. So that look how great the Good is to which the paſſion of Love hath carried us; proportionable will be the Joy, when we feel that we are owners of it. And if it now pleaſe us ſo much to think that we are really beloved of God, and of his Son *Jeſus*; what an endleſs pleaſure will the ſenſe of their Love yield us, when it hath placed us in Heaven? Do but conſider now how vaſt the Love of the Lord *Jeſus* is, in coming down from Heaven

Heaven to us, and that he knows better reaſons of his Love then we do, and that his own pleaſure is concerned in loving us, and that he cannot but finiſh his Love to thoſe who are purchaſed with his Bloud, and are of his Spirit; and it will give a marvellous ſatisfaction to your heart at preſent. But what it will do then, when he will have expreſſed all his Love to us, and perfected his kind intentions towards us, we are not able to tell. We can onely conſider a little farther, how he hath plainly told us, that they who love him will *rejoyce* now, becauſe he is gone to the Father. (xiv. *Joh.* 28.) And therefore it muſt needs be an additionall pleaſure in the other life, to *ſee* (what we here *believe*) our Deareſt Lord ſhining in the Glory of God the Father, and inthroned on the right hand of the Majeſty in the Heavens. It will be an exceeding high ſatisfaction to us, to behold him, who loved us ſo much, and was ſo ill requited for it by men, ſo gloriouſly rewarded for it by God himſelf.--- But it is ſo eaſie to apply what hath been ſaid to this purpoſe, that I ſhall leave ſuch conſiderations as theſe to your own diligence, and note ſomething that is not altogether ſo obvious.

3. Which

3. Which is, that pious Souls will considerably augment their joy, by the reflexions they will make upon their happiness, and the strong attention of their mind to their own delight and pleasure. For we are never so truly delighted, as when we find that we are not deceived in the comfort and contentment which we promised our selves; and when we take notice of all the pleasing motions that are in our hearts, and duly mark and observe the sweetness of them. Before this reflexion and self-observation, our Souls are onely touched by the Objects which they apprehend, and receive such impressions as they are able to make there: But by this means the Soul touches and strikes it self, sealing those impressions deeper, and pressing them harder upon our spirit. The presence of a Friend, without asking our leave, excites a joy and sudden passion of pleasure in our heart, upon his very first approaches: But when we consider with our selves, not onely that he is our Friend, but how good a Friend he hath been, and what joy he hath now and many other times given us; we then affect our selves with his presence and sweet company, and make the joy greater by minding how

great it is. For it is the higheſt kind
life in this world, which hath an ap
henſion that it lives. This makes the
of a man above the life of beaſts,
his pleaſures above thoſe that they en
This is it alſo which makes a man in
Lethargy to be no better then dead;
cauſe he hath no perception of his
life. The quicker therefore and
more lively this apprehenſion of
LIFE and of the happineſs and
tentment of it grows, the more bleſ
and joyfull will the LIFE it ſelf
which we ſhall then lead. If by lov
without ſeeing, we rejoyce in this wo
with joy unſpeakable and full of glo
(1 *Pet.* i. 8.) how glorious will the
be there, when *Sight* or Knowledge
be, if I may ſo ſpeak, in its high-noo
and *Love* at its full ſea; and wh
there will be no declenſion, much
night, nor the leaſt ebbe any more; a
when we ſhall with the moſt accura
quickneſs inſtantly apprehend and ob
ſerve every circumſtance that adds t
our unconceivable happineſs?

We have many conſiderations left
now, in the Goſpel of *Chriſt*, to refre
our minds withall, from his great Lov
in

in becoming a Man for us, from his Croſs, from his Reſurrection, from his Aſcenſion and ſitting at God's right hand, from his promiſe of coming again, and the hope we have of reigning with him for ever: but by not attending to ſuch bleſſed Truths as theſe, we loſe the comfort of them. And when they are mightily urged upon us by others, and the Holy Spirit of God alſo touches us, and makes us ſenſible of the glad tidings that they bring us; we loſe ſtill a great deal of the pleaſure, by not preſſing them farther upon our hearts, marking how they are affected with them. And when all this is done, we ſhall ſtill feel a damp upon our ſpirits, unleſs we can comfortably reflect upon our own ſincere love to God, and aſſure our ſelves that we are perſons qualified for this ſupreme Joy. But there will be no danger of any ſuch defects in that happy World above; where holy Souls will as readily improve, as they eaſily diſcern, every thing that gives them ſatisfaction. As nothing will eſcape their obſervation which brings any joy along with it; ſo they will pleaſe themſelves in the contemplation of their own pleaſures, till they grow greater. And ſo far they will be from wanting any reflexi-

ons on themſelves as the perſons whom God loves and delights to honour, that they cannot but perceive it, and be tranſported with the joyfull ſenſe of it. For, if we ſhould ſpeak ſtrictly, this Joy will be ſo great, that it will need no attention to it. Its own ſtrength will make it be moſt ſenſibly felt; and (as ſome have ventured to expreſs ſo ſublime a ſtate) it will, by the tranſcendent force of its delight, eſſentially reflect upon it ſelf.

4. But let us come down from theſe heights, and conſider again, that as much as the Joy which God hath in himſelf exceeds all other ſatisfaction, ſo much will the Joy which we ſhall have in him exceed all that we have or can enjoy in any other thing. *In his preſence* (ſays the Pſalmiſt, xvi. 11.) *is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures everlaſting:* which cannot fail to be the portion of thoſe who ſhall be admitted into his preſence, and have the happineſs to *See* him. For ſince by our ſight of him we ſhall be aſſimilated to him, (as was ſaid before,) and made in a manner ſuch as he is; we muſt needs be partakers with him in his Joy as well as in other things, and have ſuch a meaſure

ſure of it as exceeds all the meaſures that our ſcanty apprehenſions can now take of ſo full a Good. It is too little to ſay, that this Joy alone exceeds all worldly pleaſures, as far as the longeſt life exceeds a moment, or this whole World the leaſt mote we ſee in the Sun-beams: rather we may ſay, as far as God ſurmounts this World, or Eternity Time; between which there is ſcarce any compariſon to be reaſonably made.

5. To all which you may ſubjoyn this, as the higheſt conſideration of all, that ſuch are the Perfections of the Divine Nature, ſuch is his infinite Bounty, that they who are united to him in Love, will meet with an infinite Satisfaction. All objects of our delight here may be comprehended by our Underſtanding, and we may ſee *an end of all their perfection.* For which reaſon they may be ſlighted by our Will, as leſs then our ſelves, and unable to give us the contentment we deſire. It is at our choice whether we will love them or no, or at leaſt what portion of our love we will beſtow upon them: and therefore it is no great joy that they can give to one, who feels how much he is above them.

But God now is so full, so infinitely to love us, that he intirely satiates the heart of those that love him. We cannot refuse him, when we are perfectly acquainted with him; nor is it at our liberty to love him but to such a measure. No, He will force our Soul then to love him and delight in him as much as it can; yea, more then naturally it could without the presence of such a Good more then it believed it should ever have been able to love. And this is not a force of which the Soul grows weary, as in other cases when it is strained beyond its present capacity; but a pleasing violence, to which it opens it self, and perceiving the power of that great Good, would willingly be more possessed of it. The pleasure that it feels sweetly dilates it, and with a grateful constraint so stretches and widens it, that the extension becomes natural to it. And with all this New Love created in it, the joyfull Soul will for ever remain thus big; embracing its most beloved Good, and delighting it self in this largeness of Love.

This is the incomparable pleasure of the LIFE that *Christ* promises. All other

other joys are but cold and dull, in respect of the flames and spirits of this. It is but a dream of drowzy delight which we enjoy here, in comparison with that substantiall sprightly pleasure which our Souls will find in the bosom of God's Love; wherein they will repose themselves with such a transport, as if they would lose themselves to be all one with him. Whosoever he be therefore that is insensible of all other charms, let him hearken to this; and see what pleasure can doe, to make him in love with this Life of our Lord. Pleasure, I say, which all mankind most passionately desires, be it never so weak and imperfect: the Light of all good things; which should we suppose separated from humane life, it would be nothing but darkness and horrour. And if thou knowest not yet what spirituall delight means, let thy fleshly pleasures tell thee something of this happiness. If thou art not so sottish, as never to have a thought of any thing beyond the satisfaction of thy fleshly lusts; think how much more noble a Spirit and the pleasures of it are, then a Body and all its delights. And then raise up thy mind a little higher, to consider, that if pleasure have now such

power over thee, here are the greatest to invite thee. Pleasures, that as much exceed those of the spirit, as they do those of the flesh: Pleasures at God's right hand; the very joy of the most High, the Father of spirits; the pleasures of God himself. O come, come, if thou loveſt thy ſelf, and thy own perfect ſatisfaction, come, I ſay, whoſoever thou art that eagerly followeſt after pleaſure, to the contemplation of theſe joys which are ſo ſublimely ſweet. And be content to part with all other, if that be the onely means to be poſſeſſed of theſe. What if thou ſhouldſt ſuffer, by devoting thy ſelf to purſue theſe, in many outward accommodations? nay, if thou ſhouldſt loſe this Life, to attain that which is Eternall? It will be no dear purchace, but bring thee in an increaſe of more then an hundred-thouſand-fold. Whatſoever thou expendeſt here for the Lord *Jeſus*, He hath given thee his Bond for it, that it ſhall be repayed with *good meaſure, heaped up, preſſed down, thraſt together, and running over into thy boſome.* vi. *Luk.* 38. An overflowing joy it will be, but it runs over into our own breaſts. None of it will be ſpilt beſide our ſelves; but it will trickle down, with a delicious

ſweet-

ſweetneſs, into our own hearts: Which ſhould ſtir up our moſt thirſty deſires, methinks, to be made partakers of it. If we fore-taſte the leaſt drop of it in ſuch Meditations as theſe, it ſhould fill our hearts with ſharp longings after more; and diſpoſe us to ſay with the devout Father I named at the concluſion of the foregoing particular,

Far be it from me, O Lord, far be it from the heart of thy ſervant, to think my ſelf happy, whatſoever joy I have in this world. There is a Joy which is not the portion of the wicked, but of thoſe who ſerve thee freely; whoſe joy thou thy ſelf art. And that is the truly-happy life, to rejoyce to thee, becauſe of thee, for thee. This is it, and there is no other. Auguſt. Lib. x. Confeſ. cap. xxii.

O how far diſtant is this preſent life from that! Here is Falſhood, there is Truth. Here is Diſturbance, there is ſure Poſſeſſion. Here is the worſt Bitterneſs, there eternall Love. Here dangerous Pride, there ſecure Joy and triumph. Here we fear leſt he that is a Friend ſhould on a ſudden turn an Enemy: there a Friend is always conſtant, becauſe no Enemy can be admitted thither. Here whatſoever Good we Orat. contra Judæos, Pagan. & Arrian. cap. xxi.

we have, we are afraid to lose it: there whatsoever we receive shall be preserved by him, who takes care that neither we pass away from it, nor it from us. Here is Death, there is Life. Here all things that God hath created; there God himself in stead of all, and in all things.

But what humane tongue can extoll that, which no sense of mortalls can comprehend? We will go thither, that we may comprehend it. We will go and see there that which eye hath not seen, and hear there that which ear hath not heard, and understand there what the heart of man cannot now conceive: and seeing, hearing and understanding, we shall exult with unspeakable joy. And what Joy is that, where no Fear will be? What kind of Joy will it be, when thou shalt see thy self a companion of Angels, a partaker of the Kingdom of Heaven, in Royall state with the King of all, desiring nothing, in possession of all things, rich without covetousness, administring without money, judging without Successour, reigning without fear of Barbarians, living an eternall Life without Death?

CHAP.

Chap. III.

A farther Explication of the Happiness of this LIFE.

IV.

WE must stay, as I have said before, for the resolution of such Questions, till we enter into that Joy. And for the present be glad to know, that our Souls being thus happily disposed, shining with the Divine Light, satisfied with the Divine Love, and rejoycing in both, must needs issue forth in the most chearfull and delightsome Praises of God, who hath preferred us to such a blissfull state. For this we all find is one of the naturall effects of Joy, here in this Life. As it transports and raises the Soul above it self; as it makes us eager to possess, if it were possible, more of that Good which gives such delight; and as it makes us for the present forget all other things, all the cares and trou-

troubles of this life; and, indeed, ſo much betters and improves our Soul, that of all other things we are not willing to forgo it: So it never fails likewiſe to employ the tongue in praiſing and commending that Good, to which it owes it ſelf. How barren ſoever the Mind be, or what flowneſs ſoever there be in our Tongues; joy and pleaſure make us fruitfull in Thoughts, and quicken our Speech to declare the content we take in the company of that which is the cauſe of it. Nay, the Voice becomes bigger and louder by its means; and it never utters it ſelf, but with earneſt notes of its high ſatisfaction. And therefore it is impoſſible for the raviſht Soul, when it is come to the delightfull Viſion of God, to refrain from joyning with the Heavenly Quire, to give *Glory to God in the higheſt*, that is, after the moſt excellent manner, and with the moſt exalted affections.

As the Underſtanding, by reflecting upon the bleſſedneſs of the whole Man, will excite an extraordinary Joy in the heart, (as I have juſt now diſcourſed:) ſo, by reflecting upon the fountain from whence that happineſs flows, and earneſtly

neſtly obſerving the Originall of its enjoyments, it cannot but excite in it ſelf admiration and wondering thoughts; and preſently employ them to invent the nobleſt hymns and ſongs of praiſe, whereby to magnifie and laud this glorious Goodneſs of God. And this will make ſtill greater additions to the Joy before ſpoken of, which muſt neceſſarily be intermixed with theſe moſt affectionate Thankſgivings; as every one can witneſs who hath tried this heavenly employment, which the Pſalmiſt, in his experience, found ſo *good*, ſo *pleaſant*, *and* ſo *comely*. cxlvii. 1.

Were all the mercies of but one day placed now in a clear view before your eyes, or could you but at once behold all the bleſſings that are crouded into every moment; what admiration would it raiſe up in your hearts? what a volume of praiſes would you be able to compoſe? and how much ſweeter would this one act of lauding and praiſing God be, then the enjoyment of all the good things you praiſe him for? Raiſe up your minds then to conceive the height of thoſe Praiſes, that will be continually ſpringing and bubbling up from thankfull

full hearts, and always filling their mouths; when they shall be able to shoot their thoughts down to the very bottom of their days, and see all the curious Providences of God about them, all the favours they have enjoyed, and all the dangers they have escaped as they passed through the tumultuous Sea of worldly affairs. O what Hallelujahs will it create, when these shall be represented thick together, or stand at once before us? and when we shall not onely look upon the past loving-kindnesses of God in one train of thoughts; but in the next behold all our present enjoyments, the quiet shoar where we are landed, with the riches and pleasures of the Heavenly Country? and when we shall also think again of those that are still future; which are always beginning, and never ending, always present, and always to come? This sure will make the voice of praise more loud and shrill, and every note so sweet, that it will give the most gratefull touch unto the heart.

Look upon the little Birds, and hearken how they chirp and sing in the wide and spacious air, where they have no limits set to their liberty: and then think what

what a cheatfull life they lead, in comparison with one that is perpetually coup'd up in a cage, and ſpends many loneſome days and melancholick nights in that ſolitude. And look again upon your own Souls, which we think are capable of the higheſt pleaſures; and cannot you conceive a little how delightfull they will find it, to be always ſinging in the vaſteſt liberty and freedom; to be ſpreading their wings in the boundleſs Light to which God will bring them; and to be uttering their joys, as they ſee themſelves incompaſſed on all ſides with innumerable objects of contentment? O how infinitely will it tranſcend all that they are capable of while they are impriſoned, or rather pinioned, in this body? though one moment of thoſe Joys which are ſometimes felt here by holy Souls, is not to be exchanged for all that the world can offer in its ſtead.

And theſe Songs will be made the more melodious, by the company that ſhall joyn together in the moſt harmonious conſort. All the Saints and Angels will make up but one happy Quire; and will all ſtrive, we may imagine, with an holy emulation to excell each other, and with-

without any envy contend who ſhall ſing the loudeſt and ſweeteſt praiſes to our Creatour and Redeemer. And what delight, may we conceive, will they take in the delicate ſtrains of each other? How will they be pleaſed to hear their own voices accompanied with the hymns of ſo many celeſtiall creatures? How will the whole number be even rapt out of themſelves by the melting airs of the whole Quire; when they all lift up their voices together, as thoſe myriads of holy ones which St. *John* ſaw (v. *Rev.* 11.) acknowledging *the Lamb worthy to receive power, and riches, and wiſedom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing*, which (as he ſays v. 13.) all good Chriſtians even in this world delight to aſcribe *unto him that ſits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever?*

The Pagans had ſome little ſenſe of this pleaſure, as we may learn from *Metrodorus* himſelf: who, though an *Epicurean*, yet in theſe words, as *Clemens Alexand.* obſerves, ſpoke divinely. *Remember*, O Meneſtratus, *who art born mortall, and haſt received a life which will have an end, that aſcending with thy Soul even till*

Lib. v. *Strom. p.* 614.

till thou comeſt to eternity and the infinity of things, thou ſhalt ſee both things to come, and things that have been. For, according to Plato, *we ſhall contemplate with the happy Quire* μακαρίαν ὄψιν καὶ θέαν, *the bleſſed Viſion and Spectacle. Where we attending upon* Jupiter, *and others upon other Gods, ſhall be admitted, if it be lawfull to ſpeak it, to celebrate the moſt bleſſed Myſteries. Which we ſhall joyfully obſerve, being intire, and inſenſible of any of thoſe evills which expected us in our latter days. And we ſhall be admitted to the myſterious contemplation of thoſe perfect and ſteady ſights, in pure light: being our ſelves pure and diſingaged from this body, which we carry now about with us; to which we are tied as faſt as an oyſter is to its ſhell.* They felt, it appears by theſe words, very ſtrong motions in their Souls after a ſight of thoſe things, to which they could not reach while they were in theſe Bodies. And they had a faint hope alſo, that, when they were got looſe from theſe ſhackles, they ſhould neither be confined nor clouded; but in pure light and liberty rejoyce and be glad in the love of their gods, who they expected would admit them to the knowledge of ſuch ſecrets, as they imparted onely to

their Friends. For that's the meaning of celebrating the Myſteries; which were Secrets that all were not permitted to ſee, and when any had ſeen, they might not reveal; but were kept with feſtivall joys, after the moſt ſolemn manner, by thoſe who were thought worthy of them. To the delight of thoſe feaſts he compares the joy they ſhould have in the other life; which they were wont to promiſe to all thoſe who were admitted to the ſight of their Myſteries. There they fanſied they ſhould rejoyce in a nobler manner then they did when they followed the pomp of *Bacchus* and *Ceres*; (to whoſe myſteries this Authour aludes;) and without that noiſe and tumult which accompanied ſuch trains, behold in quiet the unknown ſpectacles of the inviſible World.

But if you think that all the expreſſions I have uſed borrow too much from ſenſible things; yet remember at leaſt what delightfull touches a ſweet voice, or other excellent muſick, hath in any moment given your Soul; and conceive then what a pleaſure it would be, to have two hours continued like that one minute, or your ſpirits ſo delicately moved

moved for one whole day together. By this means you will the better underſtand the truth of what I have ſaid: for juſt ſuch is the pleaſure of thoſe Souls, which now ſtrike themſelves and touch their own hearts with a lively ſenſe of the Goodneſs of God towards them; and which feel withall the finger of God giving the like ſtroaks upon them. There is nothing ſo delicious as this, nothing ſo powerfull to raviſh them out of their bodies. The very ſtrings would crack, and the Soul and fleſh would diſſolve their Union, ſhould there remain ſuch a powerfull and delightfull motion for ſome hours, as for a little ſpace they ſometime feel tranſporting them. They cannot but imagine, that the prolonged harmony of one day, ſhould it bleſs the Soul, would make it account all the pleaſures in this world harſh and troubleſome; and cauſe it to cry out, as the man St. *Hierom* ſpeaks of, who after he had dreamt he was in Paradiſe, called ſtill to thoſe who were about him, "Set me "again in thoſe flowry fields: reſtore "me to thoſe pleaſant walks. O let me "enjoy that melody once more; let me "hear thoſe ſweet ſongs: trouble me "no more with any of theſe worldly

" noiſes; but bleſs me again with thoſe " heavenly touches.

Lift up your minds then by ſuch thoughts as theſe, to conceive what not one day, or year, or age, but an eternity of ſuch rare raviſhing delight would be; and that is a part of that bleſſed LIFE which I am treating of. Which by your own confeſſion muſt needs be more deſirable then all that can be expreſſed by Muſick and ſweet Airs, and melodious Strains and Songs, or any ſuch like words: which muſt be acknowledged to be weak and imperfect, able to expreſs onely the outward images and ſhadows of thoſe Divine enjoyments. And the more perfectly you digeſt and frequently excite ſuch thoughts as theſe, the more you will apprehend of this bliſs; and the more impoſſible it will be, that any thing ſhould hinder you from beginning to be ſo happy, by devoting your ſelves to a Chriſtian life. One part of which is, to praiſe and bleſs the Lord at all times; to bear in your gratefull minds a faithfull remembrance of his benefits, and to expreſs it as oft as you can in the moſt thankfull acknowlegments. In which exerciſe whilſt you ſeriouſly employ your

your ſelves, you will be able thereby to know in part what the bleſſing of Eternall Life is, wherewith our Lord hath promiſed to reward our hearty obedience.

V.

And here it will be ſeaſonable to adde, that ſuch will be our *Knowledge* and *Love* of God, and our true *Delight* in him, that they will produce a moſt ſweet harmony between our Wills and his, and move us to yield a free and conſtant Obedience to him with all our powers. The *Underſtanding*, which now is ſubject to many miſtakes and errours, will then ſhine upon the Will with the rays of the pureſt Light. And the *Will*, which now is oft too refractory, will not then in the leaſt rebell againſt the Underſtanding, but be obſequious to its illuminations. And the *Affections* will be as ready to obey the Will, and follow its motions: which will all agree with the Mind of God, and perfectly correſpond to his deſires. His Will ſhall be always done, and ours ſhall be but a ſweet compliance with his. For our knowing him making us like him, will take away all

liberty from us of doing any thing but what he would have us. And the whole appetite being so intirely filled and satisfied, as hath been said, with this great Good, there can be no room left for any inordinate desires; but we must eternally cleave to God, and cannot be turn'd aside from him any more.

And it will not prove any trouble to us neither, to be thus fast bound to his will, and observe all his motions: but we shall fly as swiftly about in that free light, as the winged Angels now do; who never fetch so much as one sigh when they receive his commands, but chearfully in every thing obey his pleasure. Nay, it would be the greatest trouble to us, if we should doe otherways. We should create a disturbance in the midst of that heavenly Rest, should we not thus readily obey him. One groan would spoil all the sweet accents of the joyfull Praises which are there continually offered. Much more would one act of disobedience be so jarring with that harmony, as to make us lose the pleasure of it. But there will be no danger of this; we shall all be changed, as the Apostle speaks, not onely

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in our Body, but alſo in our Spirit: and in this, as well as all other things, that our liberty of indifferency, the freedom we now have to chuſe good or let it alone, yea to chuſe evill as well as good, ſhall be turned into a chearfull ſpontaneous motion towards that which is Good alone. The will, as ſome have expreſſed it, ſhall remain; but not the choice: we ſhall willingly ſerve God; but not chuſe whether we will ſerve him or no.

For that Sight which we ſhall have of his Beauty will not let us take our eyes off from him; and that Love which flows from thence cannot but be exerciſed by thoſe who have that bleſſed Sight: and they that cannot but ſee and love ſo great a Good, will not be able to turn their minds and hearts inordinately to any thing elſe. They therefore who ſhall be accounted worthy of that World to come, will be free from Sin, and from the fear of ſinning; whereby they will be ſecure of perpetuall Bleſſedneſs: which is neceſſary to make us perfectly happy. For they are very ſhort of it, who are in danger or in fear of loſing the felicity they enjoy. Both theſe will be far remote from that happy World;

where they will be fixt in their Happineſs, becauſe they will be fixt in their Obedience. Which as it may grow, it is poſſible, ſtill more and more chearfull; ſo it will infuſe a greater ſenſe of the Divine Love into their hearts; and every act wherein they doe the will of God may be rewarded perhaps with a greater increaſe of happineſs.

Who would not chuſe then to obey God now, that hereafter he may not be able to doe otherwiſe? Who would not ſtrive to bring his will in ſubjection to *Chriſt*, that he may at laſt exchange his own will wholly for his; the liberty, that is, of a man, for the liberty of the Divine Nature, which is always determined by an happy neceſſity to that which is Good? Yea, who would not chuſe ſuch an happineſs as is always, it is probable, growing more perfect? the excellency of which we can never comprehend, becauſe it will be growing more excellent? A Life ſo noble, that every operation of it makes it more divine? It is no diſparagement to its worth, to ſay, that we cannot at firſt know all that we ſhall know, nor love ſo much as we ſhall be able to love, nor poſſeſs all the joy of our

our Lord: but it is rather a commendation of it, that after ſuch an height of knowledge, love and joy, as we ſhall arrive unto at firſt, we ſhall be advancing to a greater nearneſs and familiarity with God.

IV.

But it is time to bring this Diſcourſe to a concluſion, when I have told you, that it is not the Soul onely which will be happy in this *Eternall* LIFE. That word, I ſaid at the firſt, imports the ſupreme felicity of the whole Man: and therefore Man conſiſting of a *Body* as well as a Soul, that muſt come in for a ſhare in this Bliſs, and at laſt be made partaker of it. Yet I ſhall not ſtay to tell you particularly what the LIFE of the Body ſhall be after the Reſurrection; becauſe I have been longer then I intended in deſcribing the operations of our nobler part about its higheſt Good. It ſhall be ſufficient to give you but theſe *two* marks, whereby to know the exceeding happy condition to which it will be promoted. *Firſt*, it muſt needs be transformed into a very noble Being, which is to be the companion of ſuch an

an exalted Soul, and be capable to comply with it in theſe ſublime operations. We reade much of its brightneſs and glory, which the Scripture ſeems to ſay ſhall be ſo great, that it will contend with the ſplendour of the Sun it ſelf: And we may very well believe it, ſeeing it is to be the Veſture of a Spirit ſo illuminated by the Viſion of God. For which reaſon, among others, it may be that the Apoſtle calls it a *Spirituall* Body. Which as it needs no ſupports of meat and drink, and is made immortall, and no longer liable to any diſeaſe: ſo is it of a purer ſenſe and a quicker power then this preſent fleſh, moving with ſo much agility and eaſe, that we ſhall feel it is no burthen to us. And the Apoſtle indeed tells us, (which is the *Second* thing) that *Chriſt*, by his power which is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf, will *faſhion it like to his own glorious body.* iii. *Phil.* 21. Now what the brightneſs of that is, you may gueſs by the Viſions of the two great Apoſtles, St. *Peter* and St. *Paul.*

The firſt of which, when he ſaw our Saviour transfigured in the holy Mount, (*Matth.* xvii.) was ſo overcharged with joy, that the ſight put him in a manner beſide

beſide himſelf. For he knew not, ſaith the text, what he ſaid, when he uttered thoſe words, *Let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moſes, and one for Elias.* He knew indeed that it was *good being there*, ix. *Luk.* 33. though he ſcarce knew where he was. This was the onely thing in his thoughts, that they ſhould be moſt happy men, might they never ſtir from that glorious place; but always remain thus tranſported, as at preſent he was. Let us be fixed here, was his wiſh; let us always live in ſuch pure light, and enjoy ſuch beautifull ſights: from whence he was loth to take his eyes, or to leave ſuch good company as now *appeared in glory*, v. 31. And yet this, you muſt remember, was no more then a glimpſe of that Glory which our Saviour was to have after his Reſurrection, and which he now ſhines in, and ſhall one day be revealed. Judge then by this, what happy creatures they will be, whoſe bodies ſhall be made *like that glorious body*; which when it was but a while transformed in this world, made the place ſeem no leſs then a Paradiſe. How illuſtrious will the condition of true Chriſtians be, when they ſhall not merely dwell in ſuch *Taberna-*

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cles as St. *Peter* wiſht; but in bodies reſembling that which was ſo transfigured, or rather of a far greater ſplendour: there appearing then, as I ſaid, but a twinkling of that Glory of our Saviour, to whom we ſhall be conformed.

For if you obſerve it afterward, when the Heavenly light of our Saviour's glorified Body incompaſſed the other Apoſtle St. *Paul*, (to whom he appeared in his way to *Damaſcus*,) he could not look upon it, as St. *Peter* had done upon the other: but it was ſo ſhining, that it put out his eyes, he continuing *three days without ſight.* ix. *Act.* 9. And for any thing we know, he had never recovered the uſe of them more, had not the ſame *Jeſus* reſtored his ſight to him by a Miracle. Theſe ſenſes of fleſh were not able to bear a Light ſo effulgent. It was to deprive them of all their operations, to approach near to ſuch a brightneſs. And yet ſuch glorious creatures will our Lord make his faithful Servants. So aſtoniſhing is his love, that he will never ceaſe his kindneſs to them, till they be *numbred among his Saints in glory everlaſting*; that is, till he impart his own moſt excellent glory to them.

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Which ſignifies that they muſt be wonderfully changed from what our bodies are now in this vile ſtate; wherein they are not capable to behold ſuch a glory as ſhall then be revealed. But the ſerious belief and hope of it founded upon the word of our Saviour, and of thoſe who were *eye-witneſſes* of his Majeſty, is a marvellous comfort to us; and ſhould make us ſtudy to purify our ſelves more and more, and to perfect holineſs in the fear of God. We ſhould cleanſe and refine our affections, and render them ſtill more ſpirituall and heavenly; that being leſs moved with the things of this world, and finding our inclinations weaker towards them, we may more readily and chearfully comply with the will of God, and prevent as much as we can the reſurrection of the dead: when we ſhall have no luſt to doe otherwiſe then as God would have us, but ſhall intirely pleaſe our ſelves in accompliſhing his good will and pleaſure.

For the more faithfully and eminently any perſons ſerve the Lord *Chriſt*, out of pure love to him and to his Chriſtian Brethren, the greater marks of his favour will he ſet upon them. Their very Bodies,

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it is probable, will ſhine in a greater glory, and be made ſo much the more illuſtrious, according as their light here ſhone brighter before men, and moved them to glorify their heavenly Father. For St. *Paul* ſeems to teach, not onely that the bodies we ſhall have after the Reſurrection will differ as vaſtly from thoſe we have now, as Earth does from Heaven; but that thoſe heavenly bodies which we ſhall put on will differ very much among themſelves in brightneſs and glory. As *the glory of the celeſtiall bodies is one, and the glory of the terreſtriall another:* ſo he tells us, (among the celeſtiall) *there is one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars; for one ſtar differeth from another ſtar in glory. So alſo is the reſurrection of the dead.* 1 *Cor.* xv. 40, 41, 42. That is, ſome will have bodies more bright then others, and ſhine as Stars of a greater magnitude; to note them to be perſons of eminent rank, who have done very glorious ſervice to their Lord.

The Martyrs, for inſtance, whoſe bodies were ſlain or burnt to aſhes for *Chriſt*'s ſake, we may well ſuppoſe will be more ſplendid then thoſe who were laid in their graves in peace. Nay, the Church

Church in St. *Auſtin*'s time, out of their great affection to them, wiſht to behold the *ſcars* of thoſe glorious wounds which they received for *Chriſt*'s ſake, ſhining with a peculiar glory in their immortall Bodies. *And perhaps*, ſaith he, *we ſhall ſee them: For it will not be a deformity in them, but a dignity; and in the body will ſhine the beauty of their vertue more then of their body.* L. xxii. *de Civ. Dei*, c. 20.

This the Writers, whom we call the Schoolmen, imagine is the *Aureola* or little golden Crown which the Judge will give to rare Vertues. By which they mean ſome accidentall reward ſuperadded to the eſſentiall Bleſſedneſs. Like the little crown of gold, wherewith the other crown upon the Table of Shew-bread was finiſhed, as the *Vulg. Lat.* renders xxv. *Exod.* 25. from whence this expreſſion ſeems to be borrowed. But that the overplus of reward which *Chriſt* will give to ſome ſhall conſiſt onely in a peculiar brightneſs of their body, I ſee no ground to determine; becauſe God hath ſo many other ways to crown the faith and love and hope of thoſe whom he delights to honour. It is better to conclude all this diſcourſe with the words of the

the ſame Father, which follow a little after*. *What and how great the ſpiritual grace of the Body will be, becauſe the time is not come to make experiment, I am afraid leſt all that we ſay of it be raſhly ſpoken.* And therefore I ſhall onely adde, of which we may be certain, that, as *Macarius* obſerves, whether it be a greater or a leſſer glory that we attain, we ſhall all ſhine together in one moſt bleſſed and glorious place. His words are theſe;

* Ib. cap. 21.

Homil. 32. *As Birds produce feathers of a different kind, and ſome fly nearer to the earth, others farther off, but all fly in one common air; or as there is one Heaven, which hath many Stars in it, ſome greater then others, but all fixed in heaven: So the Saints ſhall be differently planted* ἐν ἑνὶ ἐφανῷ τῆς θεότητος, *in one Heaven of the Divinity, and in one inviſible country.* Thither let us all direct our paths, thither let us continually aſpire; ſaying, as he does in another place, (to which I ſhall adde the words of another great man,)

Macarius Homil. 4. *O how ineffable are the promiſes of Chriſtians, who have ſuch glorious expectations, that the Faith and riches of one ſingle Soul cannot be equalled by the glory and beauty of*

of heaven and earth; though we take in all their furniture, and treasures, and variety, and goodliness, and bravery! And yet how fairly do these things shine in our eyes? and with what pleasure do we behold their beauty? *If then the created life be so good, how good is that Life which creates! If the salvation we receive be so pleasant, how sweet is that Salvation which gives all Salvation! If that wisedom be so lovely which understands the works of God, how lovely is that Wisedom which of nothing contrived them all! Finally, if there be so many and so great delights in delectable things, what and how great is that Delight which is in him that made all things delectable! He that shall enjoy this Good, what shall he have? what shall he not have? He shall have what he will, and what he would not he shall not have. If honour and riches be desired, God will make his good and faithful servants rulers over many things. Nay they shall be called Sons of God, and Gods; and where his Son is, there they shall be, heirs of God, and coheirs with Christ. If they desire true security, there is none like that: for certainly, they shall be as certain that these, or rather this Good shall never by any means be wanting to them, as they are certain they shall* Anselm. in Prolog.

never leave it of themselves; nor God their Lover ever take it away against the will of those he loves; nor any thing stronger then He be able to separate them and God. They shall rejoyce therefore perpetually. And they shall rejoyce as much as they love; and love as much as they know. And how much, O Lord, shall they know thee then! how much shall they love thee! Certainly neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entred into the heart of man in this life, how much they shall know thee, and how much they shall love thee in that. I beseech thee, O God, let me know thee, let me love thee, that I may rejoyce in thee. And if I cannot do it to the full in this life, O that I may profit every day, untill it come to the full! Let thy Knowledge grow in me here, and there be made full: let thy Love increase, and there also be full: that here my Joy may in hope be great, and there in possession full. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the ETERNITY of this LIFE.

FRom this larger (then was at first designed) consideration of the nature of this LIFE, pass we now to a short Meditation of the ETERNITY of it; which indeed is the Crown that God sets upon its head, the Circle, if I may so speak, which wreathing it self about this Happiness, makes it to be our sovereign Good. And it may not be unworthy our observation, that this *Eternity* of Life is as far above the continuance of all other blessings heretofore promised, as the *Life* it self is. LIFE among the *Jews*, according to the letter of their Law, signifying onely all earthly good things, there was onely a *long* life, not an *eternall*, in the land of *Canaan*, promised to them that kept that Law. But quite otherwise, the LIFE promised by *Christ* consisting onely in the enjoyment of spirituall and heavenly

bleſſings, it is not a *long*, but an *eternall*, never-ending life, in the poſſeſſion of theſe good things, which he hath aſſured to us. It being but fit, that as the Life exceeds that which *Moſes* promiſed; ſo the duration of it alſo ſhould as much out-run his, as *for ever* extends it ſelf beyond an *Age*.

Now the word ETERNALL may be conceived to comprehend in it theſe *Three* things.

I.

Firſt, that there is nothing but LIFE in this ſtate of Bleſſedneſs; which ſhall not be interrupted by any dolefull accident. *Life* and *Death*, I told you, in the holy language ſignifie the ſame with *Bleſſedneſs* and *Miſery*: And therefore the *Eternity* of life muſt include in its notion a ſtate of pure happineſs, of mere and unmixed pleaſure; without any thing that deſerves the name of *Death* to give it the leaſt annoyance. There we may hope to be ſo happy, as to know without miſtake, and to be wiſe without folly, and to increaſe in knowledge without our preſent toil to acquire it. Love

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is there without hatred, jealouſy or envy, joy without any ſighing or ſorrow, praiſes without complaints, obedience without reluctance, ſpeed and alacrity without dulneſs and heavineſs; in one word, perfect purity and holineſs, without ſpot or blemiſh to ſully the glory of it. As this lower region of the air we ſee is the place of clouds and darkneſs, thunder and lightning, ſtorm and tempeſt; but to the dwellings of the Sun and fixed Stars none of theſe pitchy vapours aſcend, to obſcure their brightneſs, or trouble their peace: juſt ſo is *this* World the ſcene of miſery and vexation, confuſion and diſorder, our bodies are toſſed with ſeverall ſtorms, and our Souls many times hurried with more violent tempeſts, the fierce guſts of their own paſſions; but when we aſcend to the region of Light, and are cloathed with the Sun, we ſhall be out of the reach of theſe troubles, and find our ſelves in a ſtate of perfect reſt and joy, without the leaſt diſguſt to abate our contentment.

And what will make us deſpiſe this *Valley* of tears, if this bleſſed hope have not force enough to lift our hearts above it? Who would not deſire to come to

the Mount of *Vision* and *Transfiguration*, where we ſhall SEE THE LORD, and be ſo changed thereby, as to be made impaſſible as he is? Let the Readers pardon me, if I ſo far digreſs as to ask them, What is this Wilderneſs wherein you live, that you ſhould love it better then that heavenly *Canaan*? What is *forty* years, or perhaps *ſeventy*, of toil and labour, to that *Eternall* Reſt which *Chriſt* hath promiſed? Are not theſe huſks contemptible in reſpect of the Manna, *the Bread of life, of which if a man eat he ſhall live for ever?* Is not our life here a dream, a ſhaddow of life, in compariſon with this Life that is everlaſting? Why then are you ſo hardly perſwaded to take off your thoughts and affections from things beneath, and not ſo much to handle the thorns and prickles that are in all mortall things? Why ſhould we be at ſo much pains to draw you into this Paradiſe, where, as there is a perpetuall Spring, ſo, all joy flouriſhes without the leaſt ſenſe of grief to ſpoil its pleaſures? If you would have us to account you men, we cannot but expect you ſhould entertain this Happineſs; unleſs you can either diſbelieve it, or prove it falls ſo ſhort of this deſcription, that it is not worth the price

price you must give for it. But how unable you will be to doe the former, shall appear presently, when I have told you farther, how far short this description is of the incomparable excellency of this Life.

II.

For this word ETERNALL added to it, may well denote the LIFE we speak of to be without any *intermission*, as well as without any *intermixture*. As there is no contrary sense of grief in that happy State, so there is no insensibleness of joy. The blessed Soul will never cease to feel its own pleasures, because, as there is no *night* in that heavenly country, so there is no *sleep*; in which we can scarce be said to live. The life we shall lead there will be one continued Act of knowing, loving, rejoycing, praising and obeying God; and there will be no void spaces wherein we shall doe nothing, or wherein we shall doe something else. We cannot conceive how any drowzineſs should creep upon us, or heavineſs oppress our spirits: and as for other actions besides those now named, what should there be, since all evill is banished, all sin shut out of that Paradise?

As for all Good works, there will be none of thoſe, wherein we are now imployed, to exerciſe our Obedience; as not befitting the Nobleneſs of that ſtate, wherein neither we nor others ſhall be in any need of thoſe things, which now call for our *Charity* to them, or *Juſtice* to our ſelves. What ſhall works of Mercy doe in that world, where there is no Miſery? How ſhall we viſit the ſick, where immortality and incorruption provides for a continuall health? What hoſpitality ſhall we uſe there, where no poor inhabit nor ſtrangers come? How ſhall we cloath the naked, where they are inveſted with a robe of the pureſt and moſt unſpotted light? What Enemies ſhall we ſtudy to reconcile, where univerſall Friendſhip reigns? What differences ſhall we compoſe, where all live in unity and harmonious love? And if theſe works of *Mercy* ſhall be uſeleſs, ſurely then all works of *Neceſſity*, as they are termed, will be ſuperfluous. There will be no meat, no drink, no apparell or habitation to be cared for, where there is no hunger, thirſt, and cold, or ſuch like wants, which now continually pinch us. The onely work will be, to think of God, to love him whoſe love will appear ſo wonderfull, to rejoyce in him,

him, to reckon up his benefits, to thank him for them, to perform him such services as are suitable to the dignity of that condition, to love all the blessed society, who will contribute all they can to each other's happiness. And how incomparably great will that happiness be, when we shall have no other imployment but to be happy?

There are two great defects (as a famous Divine of our own hath observed) which spoil the intireness of all our delights here; but will find no place in the enjoyments of that happy state. For (1.) all the Capacities we have now are so narrow and weak, that we cannot long bear any high pleasure: but we are soon satiated with it, and are fain, even for our own ease, to lay it aside, and seek some new delight. This makes our best contentments not to be pure and sincere, without the mixture of some dregs; for of other this fleshly state will not admit. And besides this, (2.) while we study the satisfaction of one Capacity, another must be content to go without the pleasure that it desires. They cannot all be gratified together, but the rest must wait till one hath done. And, which is worse,

while

while we fulfill the desires of the lower Faculties, the nobler commonly are deprived of their satisfaction. They that are given to their appetite, and are great purveyors for the grosser senses of the body, not onely defraud the Mind, but even the purer senses, (the Eye and the Ear,) which are the great Gates of wisedome, of their most delightfull enjoyments. Nay, such is the imperfection of this state, that the Mind it self cannot earnestly fix in one sort of studies, but commonly it is render'd thereby very unapt to reap the delight that other parts of knowledge afford. We have seen deep Contemplatours in severall Sciences, prove too unskilfull in matters of common prudence: and others strangely quick in worldly businesse, to which they have bent their minds, who have been extreme inapprehensive of Divine Mysteries. But in the life to come it will be quite otherwise; for our Capacities, as I have discoursed in the foregoing Chapters, will be there mightily improved; and so inlarged and widened, that we shall be in no danger to take a surfeit of the fullest enjoyments that can present themselves unto us. And such will be the friendly agreement and sweet harmony between the capacities and desires

of

of every faculty there, that the ſatisfaction of one can no way turn to the prejudice of any other; but rather further and ſet forward its true delight and contentment. For then, the more we know, the more we ſhall love; and the more we love, the more we ſhall know how good God is. And this we ſhall doe without any wearineſs, which now forces us to break off our ſweeteſt enjoyments; becauſe then we ſhall not ſpend, but rather improve, our ſelves by exerciſe and motion.

Which makes another conſiderable difference between this ſtate and that which we expect. All our pleaſures here, as you may clearly diſcern from what hath been ſaid, conſiſting in a vehement motion, which is very tranſient, and quickly ſlips away; we muſt reſt a while before we can renew it, and begin the motion again. The duration of the preſent is ſhort; but there are long pauſes made before another ſucceeds. For no man can always eat and drink, or every moment enjoy any other delight: much leſs can he always attend to what he enjoys, though the attention is that which makes the delight. But now, quite contrary,

this

this pleasure that flows from the Vision of God is of such a nature, that it is always felt and injoy'd. For being firm and steady, fixt and unchangeable, like God himself, it is not received by piece-meal and at certain seasons, as our pleasures here are; but is full and all together, without any space between to disjoyn its parts. Which makes those happy souls live in one continued compleat happiness and joy, which doth not pass away, but still remains. They can always love him, always praise him, always feel a sense of his goodness trickling down their hearts, and filling them with ineffable joys without any ceasing.

Who would not then by a short course of Piety here, which must be oft interrupted by sleep and other necessary occasions, (and it is well if not by many failings,) run towards this never-discontinued life of happiness in the other world? Who would not wish and strive to enjoy such a Good as will never suffer him to be out of enjoyment? None, sure, but they who, though they cannot always eat and drink and take their pleasure, yet have their hearts so sunk into such delights, that they cannot receive any

taste

taſte of theſe celeſtiall entertainments. Do but ſpend a ſerious and ſtedfaſt thought upon them, do but give your ſelves a true guſt of them; and you will ſooner ceaſe to eat and drink, then to hunger and thirſt after them.

III.

For this word ETERNALL, you will ſoon ſee, in the moſt obvious acception of it, denotes the perpetuity and everlaſting duration of this *uninterrupted* and *unintermitted* LIFE, or ſtate of higheſt Happineſs. If we ſhould ſuppoſe it to be but of a ſhort continuance, yet ſuch is the pleaſure of it, I have ſhewn you, ſo ſatisfying are its joys, that any man of ſenſe would chuſe rather to ſpend *ſeventy* or *eighty* years there, then to paſs them in this miſerable world. Nay, *one* day of that life is better then a *thouſand* of ours: and much rather ſhould we wiſh to have the meaneſt place in thoſe celeſtiall manſions, then the greateſt preferments on this Earth. But beſides that it is ſo tranſcendently ſweet and delicious, you muſt now conſider, that this LIFE knows no term nor period; but laſts as long as him that is the Authour of it. *He never began*

to

to be the Lord and to be Good, (as *Clemens Alex.* concludes his V. Book,) *being alway what he is: οὐδὲ μὴν παύσεταί ποτε ἀγαθοποιῶν, nor will he ever ceaſe to doe good, though he bring all things to an end.* Still holy Souls will enjoy the ſweet fruits of his love, when all things here wither and periſh. He is the Eternall, God bleſſed for ever, from everlaſting to everlaſting, and changes not. And ſuch will the ſtate of happineſs be to which our Lord will bring his ſervants: to *a*

1 Pet. v. 4. *Crown of glory that fadeth not away*; to

2 Cor. v. 1. *a building of God not made with hands,*

xii. Heb. 28. *eternall in the heavens*; to *a kingdom that cannot be ſhaken*; to a light that is never ſullied with any cloud, and can never be put out; to a ſplendour and glory that is neither eclipſed nor ever impaired; for it is the Glory of God, the enjoyment of his eternall brightneſs: which as it is not broken by ſleep, nor interrupted for a time by any of our earthly employments; ſo much leſs ſhall it break off by death, and ceaſe to be for ever.

This is the very Crown, as I ſaid at the beginning, and the perfection of the Happineſs we expect. This makes it to be abſolute Bliſs; becauſe it wants not

that

that continuance which all our enjoyments here deſire, but ſtill complain they cannot have. Which ſome anciently thought they ſaw moſt lively repreſented in the Hiſtory of the Creation of the World: where there is a conſtant mention, as the *Hebrews* obſerve, of the *evening and the morning* making one day, till the whole ſix days-work was ended. *The evening and the morning were the firſt day*, ſaith the Text, i. *Gen.* 5. *And the evening and the morning were the ſecond day*, verſ. 8. And ſo you reade of all the other *ſix*, till you come to the *ſeventh*: wherein *God ended the work which he had made, and reſted on the ſeventh day from all his work which he had made.* ii. *Geneſ.* 2. But it is not ſaid here, as it is in the concluſion of all the former days, that *the evening and the morning were the ſeventh day.* And therefore they lookt upon the *Six* days as a *Calendar* of the ſeverall Ages of this World, in which there is a continuall viciſſitude of day and night, of light and darkneſs, pleaſure and grief, labour and reſt, and one generation goes that another may come, till all have an end. But the *Seventh* day, in which they found no mention of evening and morning, they took to be an

Pirke R. Eliezer c. 18.

emblem

emblem of that happy *Sabbath* and perfect repose we shall have in the other Life; when, as *Origen* speaks, *we have done all our work faithfully, and left nothing undone.* After this, says he, follows *the day of God's Sabbath and Rest,* ἐν ᾗ ἐπαναπαύεται ὁ Θεὸς, &c. *in which* all pious Souls, that have finished their work, as God did his, *ascending up to the Spectacle above, and the general assembly of the just and blessed, shall feast together with God,* and keep his everlasting Sabbath of joy and gladness and peace, without any succeeding sadness and sorrow, or any conclusion of their happy enjoyments.

L. vi. contra Cels. p. 317.

Of which also the happy condition of the *Hebrews,* after they came out of their *Egyptian* bondage, was some kind of figure: for it is called by the name of a *Sabbath* or *Rest* which God gave them from their hard labours; and when they come thither, they are said to come to their *rest.* In like manner the Apostle, speaking of the Christian Happiness, calls it by the same name, and proves that there still remains another *Rest for the people of God.* iv. *Heb.* 9. And the Spirit it self saith, xiv. *Rev.* 13. *Blessed are the dead*

which

which die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labours.

There is nothing we can enjoy in this life, but, besides that it is short, we must attain that short enjoyment by much labour. We must not have it with perfect ease, but with toil and pains and the sweat of our brows. Or if it come at a cheaper rate, yet it will stand us in a great many thoughts, and be paid for with much care and solicitude afterward to preserve our contentments; which else will be in danger to be lost, and leave us the more miserable. There will be many also that envy to us our happiness: and others perhaps that will endeavour to oppress us, and deprive us of it. And if we can escape all these troubles, yet we must have a sore conflict with our selves and our spirituall enemies: which will put us to great pains to keep our selves from being corrupted with the delights of this world, or poisoned and infected with the evill examples that are round about us. Therefore this present time may well be called the *time of our labours*: after all which there is nothing we have got but must also have an end,

and we ſhall be forced quickly to take our leave of it.

But now, in that joyfull *Sabbath* that is to ſucceed, we ſhall reſt from all theſe labours, and be at no more pains to attain or keep our happineſs. There will be no danger, as I have ſaid, of our being deſpoiled of it. No Serpent can creep into that Paradiſe, to tempt and allure us from that great felicity: nor ſhall we be in any danger from our own Fleſh; nor find our ſelves in a World where there will be any thing to excite our deſires, but what we may freely take the fulleſt ſatisfaction in. By which, and all the reſt that hath been diſcourſed, you may clearly ſee, there can be nothing wanting to compleat the happineſs of that ſtate, but onely the never-ceaſing duration or continuance of it. Now in this, as was ſaid at firſt, the Reſt we expect in the other world differs from that which God promiſed the *Hebrews* in the land of *Canaan*. For by virtue of *Moſes* his Law they had a title onely to a *long life* in that fruitfull Country: in oppoſition to which, as well as to our ſhort life here, the Chriſtian Reſt is called an *ever-*

laſting

laſting Life, an inheritance immortall (becauſe incorruptible) *and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for us.* 1 *Pet.* i. 4. So our Lord himſelf calls it a great number of times in one diſcourſe he had with the ſtupid *Jews*, *Joh.* vi. where he exhorts them to labour not ſo much for the meat that periſheth, as *for the meat that endureth to everlaſting life, which the Son of man came to give them*, ver. 27. For *this is the will*, he tells them, *of him that ſent him, that every one which ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlaſting life*, ver. 40. And becauſe they were ſtill ſottiſhly regardleſs of what he ſaid, he affirms it again with the moſt vehement aſſeverations, ver. 47. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlaſting life.* And 58. *He that eateth of this Bread ſhall live for ever:* which is repeated again in ſundry other places of the ſame Chapter.

And I muſt tell you, for your more ample ſatisfaction, that our Saviour hath taken care to deliver this Doctrine to us in ſuch words as can have no other ſenſe or meaning. The word *for ever* or *everlaſting* in the Old Law ſometime ſignifies onely the duration of ſeverall years, or a

long compaſs of time, which at laſt might have an end. As the *Hebrew* ſervant who had ſold himſelf for ſix years, if when they were at an end he choſe not to go free, he was *to ſerve his maſter for ever:* xxi. *Exod.* 6. that is, till the *Jubilee*, if his maſter lived ſo long, and he were not redeemed nor releaſed. And there are many Ordinances of *Moſes*, not now to be enumerated, which are ſaid to be everlaſting, becauſe they were to continue till the coming of *Chriſt*. Now leſt any one ſhould imagine, that the Life our Saviour ſpeaks of ſhall be *everlaſting* onely in the ſame ſenſe, a very long continued happineſs, (ſeverall Ages ſuppoſe,) which in concluſion might determine and come to an end; he hath prevented ſuch thoughts, by uſing other words beſides this of *everlaſting life*, that we may be aſſured it ſignifies more in the Goſpel then it did under the Law, that is, an Endleſs Bliſs. For (1.) he not onely tells the *Jews* in the forenamed Chapter, vi. *Joh.* 50. that he was the bread of which if a man did eat he ſhould *not die:* but that *whoſoever liveth* (that is, every living man) *and believeth in him, ſhall never die*; xi. *Joh.* 26. Which is as much as to ſay, He will give us a Life

Life without any death. And farther (2.) he ſays, that whoſoever keeps his ſaying, ſhall *never ſee death:* viii. 51. Which, if it ſignifie any thing diſtinct from the former, muſt denote that he ſhall never be in any danger of death, or come near it: which, in the next words, verſ. 52. is called *taſting death.* How can this be, ſay the *Jews*, ſince *Abraham and the Prophets are dead; and thou ſayeſt, if a man keep my ſaying, he ſhall never taſte of death?* That's the phraſe wherein our Saviour's Paſſion is expreſſed, *who taſted death (i. e.* lay in the grave a while) *for every man*, ii. *Heb.* 9. And therefore may ſignifie here, that our Saviour's faithfull Diſciples, after he hath given them everlaſting life, ſhall not die at all; no, not for the ſpace of three days, though afterward they might riſe again. But I have taken notice of one expreſſion fuller then this; for he doth not onely ſay that they *ſhall not* die nor taſte of death, but (3.) that they *cannot* die any more. xx. *Luk.* 36. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀποθανεῖν ἔτι δύνανται. There is no poſſibility, after they have attained that life, that they ſhould die again; *for they are equall to the Angels, and are the children of God*, being by the Reſurrection begotten to an immortall life.

Hence it is that the Apoſtle calls this happy ſtate by the name of Ἀθανασία *immortality*, 2 *Tim.* i. 10. and Ἀφθαρσία *incorruption*, ii. *Rom.* 7. and ſaith that our bodies ſhall be raiſed *in incorruption*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 42. and *put on immortality*, ver. 53. and *bear the image of the heavenly Adam*, *i. e.* of our Lord now he is in glory, who we know dies no more, ver. 49. Which all ſignifie the Body as well as the Soul ſhall enjoy ſuch a ſolid ſtate of happineſs as cannot moulder or be diſſolved; but will remain firm and durable like the Authour of it, by whom *death ſhall be ſwallowed up in victory*, ver. 54. *i. e.* be ſo perfectly conquered, that it ſhall never recover the leaſt power any more.

Innumerable Ages ſhall never put a period to this ETERNALL LIFE; but after they are all paſt, the whole Man ſhall be as freſh and beautifull, without any declenſion or ſign of decay, as if it were but newly riſen, and had juſt then put on its pureſt robes of glorious Light. There will be as full a Good, I mean, and as great a ſtrength to enjoy it, and as perfect a liking alſo of it, after millions of ages are ſpent in the heavenly manſions, as there was at the very firſt entrance into

into them. Death being deſtroyed by him who is the Reſurrection and the Life, and who dieth no more; an immortall Soul ſhall inhabit an immortall Body, and they ſhall be *for ever with the Lord.* Where they ſhall be for ever employed in thoſe happy exerciſes before mentioned; which will for ever be to be done again. In the doing of them there will be infinite pleaſure; and in the repetition of them there will be no diſreliſh, but an infinite increaſe of pleaſure. As they always know, ſo they ſhall always be knowing more. For new beauties, we may well think, will diſcover themſelves in an infinite object; and this will excite a freſh love, and that a more vigorous joy: And ſo for ever round again there will be knowing, loving and rejoycing more and more, without any end.

It is but a little that can be ſaid of ETERNITY, though we ſhould ſpeak of it to the end of *Time.* Nay, in *Eternity* it ſelf we ſhall not be able to come to the End of it in our thoughts, no more then in our being; becauſe it hath none. We can never know it all, becauſe it is ſtill to come. And therefore how little

of it will this leaf of paper contain? or, ſhould we write never ſo much, how ſhall we be able now to reach the deſcription of a thing ſo ſublime? Thankfull acclamations to the goodneſs of our Saviour for bringing life and immortality to light, and ſerious admirations at the amazing greatneſs of what we know of it, will be far more acceptable, as well as more eaſie, then a long diſcourſe about it. And therefore I ſhall end this Chapter with my wiſhes, that this Bleſſedneſs I am ſpeaking of may not ſeem ſmall in our eyes, becauſe we can relate ſo little of it; but rather appear the greater and the more deſirable, becauſe we ſee it is beyond our preſent underſtanding. Though this vaſt Circle of Eternity cannot be meaſured by our thoughts; that makes it but ſo much the more excellent then our Span of time. And though this LIFE comprehend ſuch pleaſures as we cannot now enjoy; that doth but exalt it above the poor pleaſures of this preſent life, which we can firſt enjoy, and then contemn. We are not able, it is true, to conceive, nor can it enter into our hearts, what God hath in ſtore for thoſe that love him: but this ſhould onely excite our longings to conceive it;

and

and make us ſigh and ſay, when we think of enjoying God himſelf, and of an eternall enjoyment of him,

O the fulneſs of God! O the infiniteneſs of him that is the Life of this LIFE! *Who can tell what thou art, O moſt Bleſſed for ever; by whom all things were made, and who art All that can poſſibly be? What comforts ſhine from the brightneſs of thy face? How joyfull wilt thou make us with the light of thy countenance, when we ſhall ſee thee as thou art? It will put greater gladneſs into our hearts, then if all the glory of the world ſhould ſmile upon us.*

But what eye can be ſtrong enough to behold ſo great a Splendour? what excellent creatures muſt they be made, who ſhall be capable to SEE GOD? *It caſts us into a trance, when we do but think of being eternally beloved of thee. O what will it doe to feel our ſelves ever, ever, the objects of thy infinite love? The beauteous frame of the Heavens is exceeding admirable in our eyes. O what a goodly World is this, in which thou ſuffereſt thine Enemies to live! What a glorious torch is the Sun, which thou haſt lighted to ſhine on the unjuſt as well as on the juſt! Who then can hope to know,*

know, till he ſees, what the pleaſures are which thou haſt prepared for thy Friends? what a glorious Light ſhall ſhine from thy preſence, upon the face of thoſe that love thee? Their hearts now cannot hold the ſmalleſt glimpſe of that which ſhall for ever bleſs and raviſh them with its joys. But how can we hope to ſee it, unleſs thou wilt raiſe us above our ſelves; and make us no longer men of this world, but children of the Reſurrection, and equall to the holy Angels? We believe, and rejoyce to think, that thou wilt account us worthy to obtain that World, and the reſurrection of the dead. It is the greateſt pleaſure we have here, to hope we ſhall enjoy all the happineſs of which we now diſcourſe: nay, far more, infinitely more then can be conceived.

Auguſt. de Civ. Dei cap. ult.

For how great will that happineſs be, where we ſhall neither feel any evill, nor want any good? where all our work will be the praiſes of God, who ſhall be all in all? where no ſloth ſhall make us ceaſe to praiſe him, nor any neceſſity call us to other employment? There will be true glory indeed, where no man ſhall be praiſed, either by the errour or the flattery of him that praiſeth. True honour that will be, which ſhall be denied to no worthy perſon, nor given to any unwor-

unworthy. Nay, the unworthy ſhall not ſo much as ſeek it there, where none are permitted to come but ſuch as are worthy. True peace is there, where nothing ſhall fall croſs to our deſires, either from our ſelves or any other. There He who gave Vertue, will be its Reward; having promiſed that he himſelf, then which nothing can be greater, nothing better, will be the portion of it. What elſe ſhall we underſtand by thoſe words, I will be their God, and they my people; but that I will be their Satisfaction, I will be all that every one can honeſtly deſire, both life, and health, and ſuſtenance, and riches, and glory, and honour, and all good? For ſo we reade, that God will be all in all. He will be the End of our deſires, who will be ſeen without end, and loved without lothing, and praiſed without wearineſs. This will be the office, this will be the inclination, this will be the work of all in that Eternall Life, which is common to all. There we ſhall ſing the mercies of the Lord for ever. There we ſhall keep that truly greateſt Sabbath, which hath no Evening. There we ſhall reſt from labour and ſee, we ſhall ſee and love, we ſhall love and praiſe. Behold what will be in the End without end. For what elſe is our End, but to come to the Kingdom which hath no End? Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the Certainty of this ETERNALL LIFE, whoſe Excellency is a little farther illuſtrated out of the Holy Scriptures.

WHen I reflect upon the foregoing Meditations concerning the LIFE to come, and the ETERNITY of it, I begin to think I have wrong'd it much, by ſo poor and dull a deſcription of ſo great a Good; and by endeavouring to draw that into a few particular conſiderations, which hath in it innumerable perfections. It had been more becoming our ignorance, perhaps, to have admired its fulneſs, then to undertake to ſearch how full it is. Alas! what ſhallow brains have we to contain a wide and deep Ocean? what weak eyes, to look ſtedfaſtly upon the moſt glorious Light of heaven? How much too ſhort and narrow are our thoughts, to compaſs an Eternall duration? When we have

have done all we can, the beſt way, I think, to our ſatisfaction will be, to have recourſe to a paſſage from the mouth of God himſelf, wherein we muſt reſt our ſelves contented. It is in the xxi. *Rev.* 7. where St. *John* was told by him who ſat upon the throne, (ver. 5.) that *He that overcometh ſhall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my Son.*

A moſt marvellouſly-large Conveyance is here delivered to us from him, who hath all that can be in his poſſeſſion. The Great Lord of Heaven and Earth makes us a grant in theſe words ſo exceeding full, that we cannot deſire it ſhould run in more comprehenſive terms. For by this promiſe (1.) He makes over to us *ALL things.* Heart cannot wiſh more to make us compleatly happy, then he ſettles upon us; for there is no good thing that he will withhold from thoſe that ſtedfaſtly adhere to him. And obſerve (2.) the tenure wherein we ſhall hold theſe vaſt and large poſſeſſions, which is as an *Inheritance.* We have an everlaſting perpetuall eſtate made us in *all things.* The terms of this writing are ſuch as if it had run in theſe words, *By an eternall indefeaſible right he ſhall poſſeſs all bleſſings.*

For

For Inheritances, it is well known, among the *Hebrews* never failed, nor went out of the family. They could not be ſo alienated by ſale or gift, but they returned in the year of *Jubilee* to their firſt owner or his poſterity. Which makes the word INHERIT, in the holy language, to ſignify the enjoyment of a purchaſe or poſſeſſion out of which the inheritour can never be thrown, and which he cannot quit, but ſhall remain ſettled in him to perpetuity. This St. *Paul* calls *the riches of the GLORY of his inhehitance*, i. *Eph.* 18. to ſignify, that our celeſtiall Patrimony is not onely exceeding large and firmly ſettled on us; but alſo moſt noble, and brings along with it everlaſting honour and renown. Which is more fully explained, you may note (3.) and the reaſon of it given, in the next words, *I will be GOD to him.* I will confer, that is, ſuch benefits on him, as are fit for the bounty of the omnipotent Goodneſs to beſtow. Look what He was to *Abraham* in this world, (to whom he promiſed *to be a God*, xvii. *Gen.* 7.) that he will be to us eternally: *In bleſſing he will bleſs us, and be our exceeding great reward.*

The

The word θεὸς, GOD, answers to the *Hebrew* word *Elohim*; which doth not respect the *Essence* of the Almighty, but his *Providence*, as * *Genebrard* among others hath well observed: and signifies as much as the Judge, the Moderatour and Governour of the World, (from whence it is that Judges, Magistrates and Rulers are called by this name,) to whom it belongs to give rewards and punishments. And accordingly the *Hebrew* writers observe, that it is never said the Lord will be *the God* of any persons, but when he expresses some singularly-great kindness, and stands in a speciall relation of love to them. In particular *Abarbinell* notes (upon *Deut.* vi.) that he is never called *the God of Israel*, till he had brought them in a wonderfull manner out of the land of *Egypt*, the house of bondage. I find, indeed, that he promised to be *their God* before, when he told *Abraham*, that he would give him and his seed the land of *Canaan* for an everlasting possession. xvii. *Gen.* 8. But he did not begin to be so, till he began to lead them thither; and, in token of their being his, they had kept the Passeover, and received his Law from Mount *Sinai*. Before this *Moses* says, *We were bondmen in Egypt, and the* LORD *brought*

* *in Psal.* xiv. 1.

brought us out with a mighty hand: vi. Deuter. 21. *And the* LORD *ſhewed ſigns and wonders great and ſore upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh and upon all his houſhold, before our eyes*: ver. 22. He doth not ſay in all theſe words אלהינו *the* LORD *our* GOD; but onely, *the* LORD *brought us out*, and, *the* LORD *ſhewed*: becauſe he ſpeaks of the time before the giving of the Law, which was the greateſt kindneſs he did them after they came out of *Egypt*. But as ſoon as he had made mention of that, (ſays *Abarbinel*) in the very next words, ver. 24. he alters his ſtyle, and tells them, *The* LORD *commanded us to doe all theſe ſtatutes, to fear the* LORD *our* GOD, *for our good always*, &c. And ver. 25. *It ſhall be our righteouſneſs, if we obſerve to doe all theſe Commandments, before the* LORD *our* GOD, *as he hath commanded us*. And ſo he ſpeaks vii. 1. *When the* LORD *thy* GOD *ſhall bring thee into the land*, &c. and ver. 2. *When the* LORD *thy* GOD *ſhall deliver them before thee*, &c. and ver. 6. *Thou art a holy people to the* LORD *thy* GOD; *the* LORD *thy* GOD *hath choſen thee to be a ſpeciall people to himſelf*, &c. For from the time of his appearing on mount *Sinai* and ſo forward (ſays that learned *Hebrew* Wri-

ter.) He was *our God*, *because then we took upon us his Divinity.*

And I think I may as truly observe, that till the Resurrection of our Lord from the dead, (which compleated that ἔξοδον departure which *Moses* and *Elias* discoursed with him about, and said he should accomplish at *Jerusalem*, ix. *Luke* 31.) we never reade that the Father Almighty is called *the God* of those who believe in his Son *Jesus*. Then he demonstrated beyond all contradiction that he was their Saviour and mighty Deliverer, who would rescue them from the bondage of corruption, the fear of death, the power of the grave, and give them immortall life. And therefore then he bids *Mary* go and tell his Disciples, whom he calls Brethren, and say to them, *I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.* xx. *Joh.* 17. This is the first time he is called *their God:* but ever after there is no language more common. For as St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* call him *the GOD of our Lord Jesus Christ*; (I suppose, because he had raised him from the dead, and highly glorified him for his obedient suffering of death;) so they address themselves to him as particularly related to them,

i. *Eph.* 3, 17. 1 *Pet.* i. 3.

them, and ready to beſtow upon them the like bleſſedneſs, ſaying, *I thank* MY *GOD always*, &c. *MY GOD ſhall ſupply all your need: We rejoyce before* OUR *GOD*, &c. as you may reade in many places of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles. Which ſhews, that this promiſe in the *Revelation*, (made after our Saviour's Aſcenſion,) of being *the God* of thoſe who overcome, includes in it the beſtowing on us the moſt excellent benefits. Becauſe he will be our GOD in a more excellent manner then he ever was yet to men: ſuch a GOD as he was to our Bleſſed Lord himſelf. He will prefer us to live with him in great ſplendour and glory. He will give us an inheritance in a better Country, which is an heavenly; where all delights flow, and never ceaſe to ſpring up to thoſe happy Souls, who ſhall enjoy the eternall fruits of his greateſt love.

i. *Rom.* 8. 1 *Cor.* i. 4. iv. *Phil.* 19. 1 *Theſſ.* iii. 9.

For ſo he adds, (4.) *and he ſhall be to me a Son.* A Son, you know, expects the Inheritance of his Father; becauſe to him it properly belongs, and upon him it deſcends: And therefore to be to GOD *a Son*, is to be made like him, and to live with him in that very happineſs and bliſs which he enjoys. So St. *Paul* expreſſes it,

viii. *Rom.* 17. he shall be *an heir of GOD, a co-heir with Jesus*, who as the Son of God inherits his Glory. He shall participate, that is, with God in his everlasting life, kingdom, honour and joy: which what it is we are not able to tell, no more then we can comprehend what his Majesty is who possesses heaven and earth, and is infinite in all perfections. But we have the greatest reason that can be to expect so great a bliss, because we know that *God loves his Son Jesus, and hath given ALL THINGS into his hand.* iii. *Joh.* 35. We are sure that God *hath made him most blessed for ever; He hath made him exceeding glad with his countenance. Honour and Majesty hath he laid upon him, and his glory is great in his Salvation.* xxi. *Psal.* 5, 6.

Now it is most evident, you may again observe (5.) that the generall intendment of this promise is, to put us in hope of being made like to *Christ* our Elder Brother. For he is not ashamed to call us by that name. And this being his great Prerogative, that he is *Heir of all things*; when the Father of mercy assures us that we shall *inherit all things*, it is as much as to say, we shall share with *Christ* in his large possessions. It is easy

to

to note, how the Holy Gospell describes our expected felicity in the same terms wherein it speaks of that which *Christ* our Head enjoys: with whom St. *Paul* says we shall *appear in glory*, and *reign with him*, and have a *glorious body* like his, and in order to it be *caught up in the clouds*, (1 *Thess.* iv. 17.) which was the manner of his ascension to heaven, i. *Act.* 9. And accordingly here God promises to him that overcomes, that he shall *inherit all things*; in conformity still with our Saviour, *whom he hath appointed heir of all things*. i. *Heb.* 2.

I cannot say there is any allusion in these words to the *Olympick* rewards, given to the Conquerours in those Combats: but so it is, that they who overcame there were accounted ἰσόθεοι equall to their Gods; that is, their Hero's or deified men: and therefore had Statues erected to their honour, and an annuall Pension settled on them for their more noble maintenance. But what was this to the reall Divine honour and glory which God will give to victorious Souls? To whom he promises not a small Pension or Annuity; but an *inheritance*, and that of *all things*: *i. e.* to shine in the glory of our Blessed Saviour; who is King of kings and

Fabri *Agonist. L.* ii. *c.* 11. 16, 17.

Lord of lords, and can prefer all his Subjects to such a greatness, that they shall be more like Gods then men. So St. *Greg. Nazianzen* often speaks, that * *we shall be made Gods in the other World, by him that was made Man for us in this.* It is hard to tell what *Heraclitus* meant by that speech recorded in *Clemens Alexandrinus* *, ἄνθρωποι θεοὶ, θεοὶ ἄνθρωποι· *Men are Gods, Gods are men:* But it is verified in the Christian Religion, which reveals a Divine state, to which we shall ascend when we leave the earth, by him who came down from Heaven into a vile condition, that he might promote us thither.

* *Orat.* xxxvi. p. 592.

* *L.* iii. *Pædag.* c. 1.

Let us study then these words very hard, and think often what it is to have ALL THINGS that the love of the Almighty will bestow, when, in the most eminent sense and in another World, he shall become OUR GOD: and what it is to have an estate in him that can never be cut off, but remains as firm as the Throne on which he sate when he spake these words. And then, if you believe in him, it will fill you with unspeakable joy, (without entring into particular enquiries,) to think that you shall be

so

ſo happy as to be his *Sons* and *Heirs*, who want nothing that can be deſired, or he can give. And indeed theſe other words, ETERNALL LIFE, wherein God's gracious promiſe commonly runs, are of the ſame import and force with thoſe now mentioned. All that we hope for is contained in them. As (1.) *Pardon of Sin*: without which we cannot take one ſtep toward ſo great a bliſs. For death, the fruit and puniſhment of ſin, will ſtill remain, unleſs ſin be pardoned: and then what hope can we have of life, much leſs of Eternall life? which is therefore perhaps called by the name of *Righteouſneſs*, v. *Gal.* 5. becauſe it includes our perfect juſtification and abſolution from the guilt of ſin, without which we could not attain it. And (2.) it ſuppoſes the *Adoption of Sons*; which is begun in this life, but not perfected till the next: when we ſhall be made the children of God by receiving a new life from him at the Reſurrection of the dead. And (3.) the *Redemption of the Body* is another bleſſing included in it. For being raiſed again, it will be freed from its preſent weakneſſes, alterations and pains, to which it is obnoxious; and ſtand in need of not ſo much as food

and raiment. And therefore the time when he will bestow it is called the *day of our Redemption.* iv. *Eph.* 30. To which must be added (4.) the *carrying of it up to heaven, to meet the Lord:* For being raised a spirituall body, it will not be fit for this World, but for the other. Where (5.) we shall *rest with him* in the celestiall Inheritance, and enjoy all the happiness it affords: for LIFE, you have heard, signifies all good things. And (lastly) the *Perpetuity* of them is plainly expressed in the word ETERNALL; which makes the happiness of this heavenly LIFE appear so exceeding great, that our present Life, compared to it, is (as *Censorinus* says of Time in regard of Eternity) no more then a Winter's day.

Let this then suffice us to know, that we shall have a perfect enjoyment of all the Good we are capable to receive, when we are made greater then we are, by the change that shall be wrought in us at our departure hence, and at the resurrection of the dead. And let our pains be more imployed to know the truth and certainty of this, then to know what the Good is we shall enjoy; which

which will be beſt known by poſſeſſing it.

And herein now we may admire the Goodneſs of God, and ſee how liberall he is of his bounties, where we are capable to receive them. Though he hath ſaid little to make us particularly underſtand the LIFE of the next world; yet he hath ſaid very much to aſſure us that there is ſuch an happy Life. Where we can underſtand and comprehend his mind, there he fully expreſſes himſelf; and therefore where he is more ſilent, it is (no doubt) becauſe, ſhould he ſpeak of ſuch matters, we cannot underſtand him. We are able to conceive any thing that he ſhall declare for the reaſon of our hope, and the ground of our faith; and it highly concerns us to be very well ſatisfied in the foundation of ſuch expectations in a future World. And therefore herein our gracious God hath not been ſparing to reveal himſelf; but hath granted us the ſtrongeſt Evidences for our claim to ſuch an *Inheritance*. Which makes me conclude that, if we were as capable to receive inſtruction concerning the *Inheritance* it ſelf, and to have a *Terrier* (as I may call it) or particular deſcription

ſcription of that heavenly Country, of the manner of their Life, and all the fruits growing there, delivered to us; He that hath been ſo large in the aſſurances he hath given us, would not have denied us alſo this ſatisfaction. Well therefore it is for us, that this is the onely reaſon why we want it, and know not *what we ſhall be*; becauſe we cannot, till we be changed, be made partakers of ſo great a knowledge. And well is it for us, that we have alſo ſo good a cauſe to think that this is the onely reaſon; becauſe God hath manifeſted himſelf ſo fully to us in other things that belong to our happineſs, by giving us the moſt firm grounds whereon to build our future hopes.

This is the thing which this preſent Treatiſe chiefly intends, to ſhew, as God himſelf ſpeaks concerning the promiſes of the New *Jeruſalem* xxi. *Rev.* 5. that *theſe Words are faithfull and true.* There is no couzenage or deceit in theſe promiſes, no fraud or colluſion in the drawing them up; nor any alteration in God's mind ſince they were made, and he hath ſet ſuch ſeals to them: But I may ſay, as he there doth to St. *John*, who it's poſſible might doubt of what the Angel had

ſhewn

ſhewn him, *Behold,* (or, as *Andreas Ceſarienſis* reads it,) ἰδοὺ, ἰδοὺ, *Behold, behold, I make all things new.* See here and obſerve; I my ſelf, who ſit upon my Throne, aſſure thee of the Certainty of theſe Viſions: If thou wilt take my word, I here paſs it to thee, that I will fulfill all theſe promiſes. Such, I ſay, is the unqueſtionable credit of the *Words of* ETERNALL LIFE. God himſelf hath ſpoken them; He hath bid us believe them; yea, he hath ſaid, we muſt account him a liar, if we do not rely upon them: For *this,* ſaith St. *John, is the Record, that God hath given us eternall Life, and this Life is in his Son.*

Before I come to a particular examination of all that hath been ſaid and done to verify this, let me note theſe *two* things, *Firſt,* that the Apoſtle ſaith, we have a I.
RECORD of this truth; which is atteſted from the mouth of ſeverall infallible Witneſſes, who have depoſed what they ſaw and heard about it, to the ſatisfaction of all thoſe that will conſider their teſtimony. There being ſuch a RECORD, that is, that *Jeſus is the Son of* GOD, we have no reaſon to doubt of the *Eternall Life* he promiſes: but upon the very ſame grounds that we believe the

the one, we ought to believe the other. If the *Father*, the *Word*, the *Holy Ghoſt*, and all the other Witneſſes, have proved the former by undeniable teſtimonies; then at the ſame time they proved this alſo, that we ſhall *live by him.*

For (1.) it is evident that, if *Jeſus* was the *Son of God*, ſent by him in a ſpeciall manner into the world, to act in his ſtead; we are to believe all that he ſays of himſelf, or that others by his commiſſion and authority have declared him to be. Now if we look into his Goſpell, we ſhall find that he moſt earneſtly affirms himſelf to *have been before Abraham was*; viii. *Joh.* 58. and to have had a *Glory with God before the world was*; xvii. 5. and to be ſo *one with the Father, that the Father was in him, and he in the Father*: x. 30, 38. And they who were his inſpired Witneſſes, whom he ſaid *he would ſend as the Father ſent him*, xx. 21. and who were filled by him with the Holy Ghoſt, declared him to be *God's WORD*, who *in the beginning was with God, and was GOD*; i. *Joh.* 1, 2. *the image of the inviſible God, the brightneſs of his glory, and the character of his perſon; who in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth,*

earth; and the heavens were the works of his hands. i. *Col.* 15. i. *Heb.* 3, 10. From all which we may certainly conclude, that he is not onely the *Son of God* in regard of his Authority, but by Nature; *begotten of him before all worlds, of one ſubſtance with the Father.* And therefore

We may be confident, (2.) that he being thus nearly related to God, muſt needs know his mind, and be acquainted with his moſt ſecret purpoſes and reſolutions: To which he was ſo privy, that he ſays he *was then in heaven*, when he was come down to reveal them to men. iii. *Joh.* 13. So that we may ſafely look upon the promiſes he makes us of ETERNALL LIFE, as the declarations of God's gracious will and pleaſure, which ſhall undoubtedly be fulfilled. *No man* indeed (as St. *John* ſpeaks, i. 18.) *hath ſeen GOD at any time; the onely-begotten Son, which is in the boſome of the Father, he hath declared him.* For who could dive into God's mind, and tell us what was in his thoughts? What man could enter into his breaſt, and ſee what was in his heart to doe for us? None but his onely-begotten Son; who being in his boſome,

boſome, and privy to his moſt ſecret Counſels, ἐξηγήσατο, hath *declared* or *expounded him*, *i. e.* his hidden will and decrees, which elſe had not been revealed to us. It is the opinion of *Maimonides* in ſeverall parts of his Works *, that when *Moſes* prayed God *to ſhew him his Glory*, he meant his Eſſence, of which he deſired to have a diſtinct conception as it is in it ſelf; ſuch as we have of a man when we have ſeen his face, and by the image of him remaining in our mind can diſtinguiſh him from all other men. But there are other of their Learned men, who by his Glory underſtand the Rewards he will give the pious, and the proſperity he ſometimes beſtows on the wicked. Whatſoever it was, God told him he could not comprehend it, but muſt be content with the ſight onely of *his back parts*, not of his *face*. xxxiii. *Exod. ult.* That is, ſaith *Maimonides*, with the knowledge of ſomething of his Eſſence; or, as he elſewhere expounds it *, of his *Works and Attributes*; of which he had ſuch an obſcure knowledge as we have of a man whoſe back parts we have ſeen, but never beheld his face. To be ſo intimately acquainted with God and his mind as he wiſh'd, was the priviledge of

* *L. de Fund. Legis cap.* i. *n.* 10. *More Nev. part.* i. *c.* 37. 54. &c.

* *More Nev. p.* i. *c.* 21.

of the *Meſſiah* alone, who had the cleareſt and fulleſt ſight of the Glory of the Father, both of his Eſſence, and his Will, and his gracious intentions towards us: for he is εἰς τὸν κόλπον *in the boſome* of the Father, and therefore *ſees his face*, as the Scripture ſpeaks; and hath not merely ſome obſcure repreſentations of him, like that of a man when he turns his back to us, but a full view of him in all his perfections, of which he himſelf is the very Image. And what he ſaw, he hath by God's expreſs will revealed to us; and diſcovered thoſe things which eye never beheld (but were kept ſecret from the foundation of the world) concerning the glorious rewards which his love will give to all pious perſons. For ſince I have proved that he is *his Son*, we cannot imagine that he preſumed to ſay more then he knew, or told us things out of his own mind onely, (when he ſpake of ETERNALL LIFE, as he frequently did;) but *what he hath ſeen and heard, that he teſtifieth*, as it is iii. *John* 32.

We cannot believe otherwiſe (3.) when we look upon him as the *Son of God*, but that he muſt needs ſpeak the very truth to us. As he could not but know

know the Mind of God, if he was ſo one with him; ſo he could not but ſpeak to us according to what he knew of his Mind. For as the Father is Truth, ſo is the Son; becauſe he is perfectly the ſame with the Father. *We worſhip the Father of Truth, and the Son the Truth; who are two in perſon, but one in conſent, and agreement, and identity of will:* as *Origen* * ſpeaks explaining thoſe words of our Saviour, *I and the Father are one*; x. *Joh.* 30. and, *I am the Truth*: xiv. 6. We may be confident that the words of both are equally *faithfull and true*. So God the Father bad St. *John* write of his own ſayings, as I obſerved before, xxi. *Rev.* 5. And in the ſame ſtyle our Saviour commands him to write of himſelf, *Theſe things ſaith the Amen, the faithfull and true witneſs.* iii. *Rev.* 14. *John Baptiſt* had ſaid as much before, iii. *Joh.* 34. *He whom God hath ſent ſpeaketh the words of God.* To which the words of our Saviour, in another place of that Goſpell, perfectly accord, xii. 49, 50. *I have not ſpoken of my ſelf; but the Father which ſent me, he gave me a commandment what I ſhould ſay and what I ſhould ſpeak. And I know that his commandment is* EVERLASTING LIFE: *whatſoever I ſpeak*

* *L.* viii. *contra Celſum.*

ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak.

And (4.) he hath no leſs Power then he hath Truth; but being the *Son of God*, the heir of all things, can make good his gracious promiſes, and put us into the poſſeſſion of the Eternall Inheritance, which we expect as coheirs with him. He was *declared the Son of God with power by his reſurrection from the dead*; i. *Rom.* 4. according to his own prayer juſt before he offered up himſelf to God, *Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee: As thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternall life to as many as thou haſt given him.* xvii. *Joh.* 1, 2.

And can we think (5.) that he will not faithfully execute this truſt, and imploy his power for the end to which it was given him? He would not then be like his Father, *who keepeth Truth for ever:* As he alſo moſt certainly will; being the *ſame Jeſus yeſterday, and to day, and for ever.* xiii. *Heb.* 8. For if *Moſes* was faithfull in the houſe of another, wherein he was but a Servant: no doubt our Lord, who is *a Son over his own houſe* or family,

(iii. *Heb.* 6.) will not fail to discharge his royall office with all exactnes; but manifest himself to be like his Name, *The Word of God*, xix. *Rev.* 13. *Faithfull and true*, ver. 11.

This RECORD concerning him St. *John* thought so weighty and secure an evidence, that he concludes all good Christians as sure of Eternall Life, as if it were already in their hands. For after he had said here, (in the words I am explaining) that God hath *given us*, *i. e.* made us a promise of, *Eternall Life*, *which is in his Son*; he adds immediately, (which
II. is the *Second* thing I intended to note,) that *we have* eternall life. Which cannot signify les, then that we have such a good right to it, that we may account it ours. The reason is, because he that effectually believes in *Jesus*, *hath him* in whose power it is to give it, and who hath passed his word, many a time, that he will bestow it. So you reade ver. 12. *He that hath the Son, hath life.* He may be as sure of it as if it were in his present possession: for by faith in *Christ* he is united to him who is the fountain and well-spring of life and blis, and stands ingaged divers ways to make all the Members of his Body

dy happy with himſelf. For *to as many as received him he gave ἐξουσίαν power*, or *authority, to become the Sons of God*: i. *Joh.* 12. who may legally claim the conſummation of their adoption, in the Eternall Inheritance. They are by his grant unqueſtionable heirs of it, and have ſuch a ſtrong title to it, that they can never be defeated of it. *This heavenly Eſtate is in them*, as Lawyers ſpeak, *though they be not in it.* They have an indiſputable right, I mean, to it, and may call it theirs; though they be not yet ſeiſed of it, and have not taken poſſeſſion; which in due time none can hinder or debar them of. So the Apoſtle would have the Faithfull ſtedfaſtly believe; for this was the very end for which he recorded the Evidences forementioned, that *they might know they have eternall life*, ver. 13. which he repeats often in his Goſpell, as you may reade iii. *Joh.* 36. v. 24. vi. 47. where he aſſerts this in the moſt earneſt manner, and aſſures them that he ſpake of this matter out of certain knowledge, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlaſting life.* He is a moſt happy man, and may look upon himſelf as owner of more then all this world is worth. Which he can never loſe, though

he be not yet entred upon his inheritance; becauſe it is in the cuſtody of him who hath all power in heaven and earth, and hath ſaid, as it there follows, ver. 54. *I will raiſe him up at the laſt day.*

Well then, ſeeing that theſe are the things we expect, *to have our ſins blotted out when the times of refreſhing ſhall come*, to be made *children of the reſurrection*, to be *delivered from the wrath to come*, to have *glorious bodies*, to *reign with Chriſt*, and to be made *heirs of all things*; and ſeeing we are ſaid to *have* this bliſs, *i.e.* to have a certain right to it, if we believe on him; and ſeeing alſo that our right is apparent from the ſame *Records* or *Witneſſes* whereby it was *proved that Jeſus* is the *Son of God:* All that I can apprehend remaining to be done, to give us a fuller certainty of theſe promiſes, is to make particular inquiry what every one of thoſe *Witneſſes*, which teſtify to *Jeſus*, ſay to this point, that *God hath given us eternall life*, and *that this life is in his Son.* This is the RECORD, St. *John* ſaith, *i.e.* this is the matter of it. Let us examine, if you pleaſe, all theſe *Six Witneſſes* one after another upon this matter, and ſee if they do not give the ſame evidence of it

it that they have done of the other; and make as infallible proofs that God hath given us this bleſſing, and that it is in him, as they do that *Jeſus* is the Son of God, and came from him.

There is no way like to this (that I know of) to attain a ſtrong faith and hope of Eternall Life: which it infinitely concerns us all to make ſure, and to have a well-grounded perſwaſion of, both that we may live comfortably in the midſt of all troubles; and that we may be able to overcome all temptations; and that we may be willing to die; and, when nothing elſe will give us the leaſt comfort, we may lift up our heads with unſpeakable joy.

For what can deject their hearts, whoſe hope is firmly fixt in Heaven? What ſhould make them complain, who have for their Inheritance everlaſting Life? Unſpeakable, unconceivable are the glories, innumerable are the good things, which God hath prepared for thoſe that love him. As in things viſible, the plants, the ſeeds, the flowers are ſo numerous that none can count them, nor is it poſſible to caſt up the ſumme of all the other treaſures of the Earth; or as in the Sea, the wit of man cannot comprehend the creatures Macarius *Hom.* XXXIV.

in it, either their number, or their kinds, or their differences, or take the measure of its waters, or of its place; or as in the Air none can number the Birds, or in the Heavens tell all the Stars: So it is impossible to tell or conceive the riches of Christians in the invisible world; their unmeasurable, their infinite, their incomprehensible Riches. For if these Creatures are so infinite and incomprehensible by man, how much more He that made and form'd them all?

And therefore it ought to fill every Christian heart with the greater joy and exultation of spirit, because the Riches and Inheritance prepared for them so much surpasses all that can be uttered. And with all diligence and humility should we buckle our selves to the Christian Combate, that we may be partakers of their Riches. For the Inheritance and the portion of Christians is God himself. They may say, with David, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance; My lines are faln unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage. Glory be to him who gives us himself. Glory be to him for ever, who mixes his own Nature with Christian Souls.

O the ineffable kindness of God, who freely bestows no less then himself upon us! O the

the ineffable happineſs of ſuch Souls, who are wholly in joy and mirth and peace, as ſo many Kings, and Lords, and Gods! Behold here thy Nobility. Chriſtianity is no vulgar or contemptible thing. Thou art called to the dignity of a Kingdome; not like that of earthly Princes, whoſe glory and riches are corruptible and paſs away: but to the Kingdom of God, to Riches divine and celeſtiall which never decay. For there bleſſed Souls reign together with the heavenly King, and in the heavenly company.

Since ſuch good things therefore are ſet before us, ſuch glorious promiſes are made us, ſuch great good will of our Lord is manifeſted towards us; let us not deſpiſe his kindneſs, nor be ſlack in our motion towards Eternall Life: but give up our ſelves intirely to the good pleaſure of the Lord. And let us call upon him, that by the power of his Divinity he would redeem us from the dark priſon of diſhonourable affections, and vindicating his own Image and Workmanſhip, cauſe it to ſhine moſt brightly; till our Souls be ſo ſound and pure, that we be made worthy of the communion of the Spirit, giving glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghoſt for ever. Amen.

CHAP. VI.

Concerning the Teſtimony of the FATHER.

WE muſt begin, as we did before, with the *Witneſſes in Heaven*: the firſt of which, you know, is the FATHER; who ſpake *three* times from Heaven by an audible voice, to teſtify to our Lord *Jeſus*. And if you examine again all that he hath ſaid, you will find *both* theſe things *recorded* in his words, that *he hath given us* ETERNALL LIFE, and that *this* LIFE *is in his Son*.

I.

The firſt time that God the FATHER ſpake from Heaven was at our Saviour's Baptiſm; when the Heavens were opened, and a Voice came from thence, which ſaid, *Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleaſed.* iii. *Luk.* 22. In which words there are *two* things very remar-

remarkable, which plainly teſtifie to the Truth of thoſe *two* now mentioned, that LIFE is in his Son, and that we ſhall partake of it.

I. That He calls *Jeſus* his SON, and his *beloved* Son. Which being ſpoken from heaven in ſuch a glorious manner as the Goſpell deſcribes it, muſt needs ſignifie him to be his SON in the moſt eminent ſenſe; for it was never ſaid to any Angel in this ſort, *Thou art my Son*, my beloved Son. This declared him to have *the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily*, to be inveſted with his own authority and power, and to be that Seed promiſed who ſhould bleſs all the World: which is a thing too great for any one to doe but for GOD himſelf. It was by an audible voice from heaven that the Angel of the Lord called to *Abraham*, to tell him *the LORD had ſworn by himſelf, that in his ſeed all the nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed.* xxii. *Gen.* ver. 15, 16, 18. And ſo now, to ſhew us the Seed was come who ſhould be ſuch a great Benefactour to mankind, the LORD himſelf ſpeaks by a voice from Heaven, declaring *Jeſus* to be his SON, the Authour of that Univerſall Bliſs

Bliſs which he had promiſed. Which tells us plainly enough that LIFE is in him; (which is one of the things that St. *John* affirms upon this *Record:*) for elſe he would not be ſuch a Son as he now declared him, able to *bleſs all Nations.* Who it is manifeſt had him not for their viſible Leader, as the *Iſraelites* had *Moſes* and *Joſhua* to give them a temporall inheritance; and therefore were to have his ſpirituall Divine Benediction in another world, where He is *the authour of eternall Salvation to all that obey him.*

And leſt you ſhould imagine this to be merely a collection of mine own, which I have forced out of theſe words, I will refer you to our Saviour's own interpretation of them in that ſpeech of his v. *Joh.* 26. *For as the Father hath life in himſelf, ſo hath he given to the Son to have life in himſelf.* Here he teaches us to argue, that, if he be the SON of God, as this voice ſaid he was, then he is by the ſame voice declared to *have LIFE in himſelf*; becauſe the Father hath ſo, whom his SON, his onely SON, doth perfectly reſemble. And he teaches us withall, that this is a power communicated to him, as he is the *Chriſt:* for he ſaith the Father *hath given him*

him to have life in himſelf, and that (as you reade in the next verſe) becauſe *he is the Son of man*; that is, the great perſon he promiſed to ſend of the ſeed of *Abraham*. Now we reade of no other time when the Father might be ſaid to have *given him* this power, but now, when he owned him for his SON, and anointed him, as you ſhall hear, with the Holy Ghoſt, to preach the glad tidings of immortal life. Now *God the Father ſealed* and authorized him to be the perſon, to whom we muſt repair for *the meat that endureth to everlaſting life*. vi. *Joh.* 27. He declared him now to be *the bread of God*, as he calls himſelf, *which gives life to the world*, ver. 33. the *bread of life*, ver. 35. *the living bread*, ver. 51. the *manna which came down from heaven*, and nouriſhes to eternall life: in ſhort, to have all things committed to him, that *whatſoever things the Father doeth, theſe alſo*, you may be ſure, *the Son doeth likewiſe*. v. *Joh.* 19. He doeth them κατ' ἀξιωσιν ὁμοίμιαν, after the ſame equality and perfect likeneſs of power: (as *Greg. Nazianz.* *. expounds the word ὁμοίως *likewiſe* in this place.) So that we need no more doubt of his ability, then we do of God the Father's, to give eternall life to all his followers.

* *Orat.* 36. p. 584. D.

II. And

II. And that he will imploy his power to make us partakers of it, (which is the other part of the *Record* concerning this Eternal Life,) is manifeſt from the next part of this voice of God the Father, which ſaid, *in thee I am well pleaſed.* He expreſſes here, that he takes a ſingular delight in this perſon, and bears ſuch a dear affection to him, that there is nothing he will deny him. Now that hereby is denoted alſo his exceeding great love and good will towards all thoſe that belong to his Son, you may be ſoon ſatisfied, by obſerving that theſe are the very words wherein God declares his loving-kindneſs towards his Church in the days of *Chriſt*, lxii. *Iſa.* 4. There the Lord calls her חפצי בה *Hephzi-bah*, ἡ εὐδοκία μου ἐν αὐτῇ, (as ſome Greek verſions render it,) *my delight is in her.* That's the reaſon he himſelf gives of her name, as it there follows, *for the* LORD *delighteth in thee.* Where the LXX uſe the very word in which this voice from heaven is recorded, ὅτι ὁ Κύριος εὐδόκησεν, *for the* LORD *is well pleaſed in thee.* From whence I think it reaſonable to conclude that, the ſame thing being ſaid of both, God declared his delight in all Chriſtians, and the pleaſure he will take in beſtowing his

benefits

benefits on them, when he declared himſelf to be *well pleaſed* in this his dear Son, whom they acknowledge for their Lord and Maſter. He tells us by this voice, that he will be reconciled to us, and, forgetting our ill behaviour towards him, will eſpouſe us to himſelf (as it follows in the Prophet) in the tendereſt love, and rejoice to beſtow his choiſeſt favours on us.

And that this is no inference merely wrung from theſe words, or a notion of my own contrivance, you may preſently agree, if you conſider that thus *John Baptiſt*, in all likelihood, underſtood them. For ſeeing *Jeſus*, a little after he had baptized him, coming towards him, he cried out, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world.* i. *Joh.* 29. And again, the next day after this he pointed two of his Diſciples unto *Jeſus*, and ſaid in part the very ſame words, *Behold the Lamb of God*, ver. 36. Now what is it to be the *Lamb of God*, but to be a Sacrifice of God's own appointment, ſo pleaſing and acceptable to him, that it obtains all the ends for which it was offered? And what is it to *take away the ſins of the world*, but by overcoming all the temptations to which

which *Adam* yielded, and being obedient even to the death, to reſtore us unto a right of entring Paradiſe again, from whence our Sins have excluded us? to open the Kingdom of heaven to all believers, by removing, as I may ſay, the flaming Sword; that is, taking thoſe obſtacles out of the way that debarred us from approaching to the Tree of life? This, no doubt, is the compleat meaning of *Carrying away the ſins of mankind*, which are the onely impediments that hinder us from the enjoyment of immortality: and therefore being gone, we have free leave to return to it. Now *John* the *Baptiſt* had no other ground that we can find for this Concluſion, but onely this Voice, which I proved he heard, from the Father, concerning the pleaſure which he took in his Son. Whereby he did as good as affirm, that his delight in *Jeſus, who delighted to doe his will*, was ſo great, that he would reſtore us into his ancient love for his ſake, and be perfectly appeaſed and reconciled to us by his means: ſo that we ſhould be no longer baniſhed from his bleſſed preſence, but by the forgiveneſs of our ſins be placed again in that happy ſtate, from which we had ſtood ſo long exiled.

II.

II.

Now from hence let us paſs to take a review of the *Second* Teſtimony of the *Father* to him; where we ſhall find the ſame thing recorded again, that *He hath given us eternall life*, and that *this life is in his Son*; *i.e.* it is in his power to give it. The places are well known where we may meet with it, in xvii. *Matt.* and other Evangeliſts, which tell us that *Jeſus*, being on an high Mountain with three of his Diſciples, who were wont to attend him on particular occaſions, was transfigured before them, and a voice came from Heaven, which ſaid, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed; hear him.* It would be too tedious to ſpeak of this *Mountain*, and his *Transfiguration* there, in ſuch a glorious manner that his *Countenance ſhone as the Sun:* (though this may reaſonably be thought (as I ſhewed in the former Treatiſe) to be a repreſentation of his Aſcenſion into heaven, where he ſhines at the right hand of the Father, and is the *Lord of glory.*) And therefore I ſhall onely obſerve two things: *firſt*, the words now added to the voice formerly delivered; *ſecondly*,

ſecondly, the manner wherein they were ſpoken in the audience of thoſe Apoſtles.

I. As for the words now added in this *ſecond* voice to thoſe of the *firſt*, (wherein he had declared him, as he doth here again, his beloved Son, in whom he delighted,) they are theſe, HEAR YE HIM. Which are the very words that *Moſes* ſpake to the Children of *Iſrael* when he propheſied of the *Meſſiah*, and ſaid, (xviii. *Deut.* 15.) *unto him ye ſhall hearken.* And it may be one reaſon why *Moſes* was now preſent when God ſpake theſe words in the Mount; that he might conſent to this truth which was now ſo ſolemnly pronounced in his hearing, that *Jeſus* was the Great perſon of whom he had propheſied. Now God bidding the Apoſtles HEAR HIM, and *Moſes* himſelf, to whom they had hearkened all this while, being content that he ſhould take his room; it is an argument of ſomething to be declared by him that *Moſes* had not ſpoken. And what ſhould that be, but onely *the words of Eternall Life*, which was but obſcurely intimated and ſhadowed in the ancient Law; but by him was preached ſo clearly and diſtinctly,

ſtinctly, that the voice of the Heavens is not more audible?

There is nothing, I ſhall ſhew in due place, that our Saviour preached ſo frequently, nothing upon which he inſiſted ſo long and earneſtly, and took ſuch pains to ſettle in mens minds, as this belief, that *Eternall Life* ſhall be the portion of all that doe well. And therefore when God the Father bad them *hear him*, who made it his principall buſineſs to publiſh this glad tidings to the World, it was the very ſame as if this Voice had ſaid in expreſs words, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed; believe it, He ſhall give you eternall life.*

This is *the Commandment* his Father gave him, as you heard before, xii. *Joh.* 50. This is *the will of him that ſent him*, vi. *Joh.* 40. *This is the promiſe that he hath promiſed us, even eternall life*, 1 *Joh.* ii. 25. And therefore he ſtands engaged to beſtow it, and we agree with him for it when we enter into his ſervice. For you may obſerve farther, that as to *hear Moſes* was to embrace the Covenant that God made with them by him: ſo we can underſtand no leſs by *hearing the Son of God*,

God, then our entring into the New Covenant, of which he is the Mediatour; which is founded upon *better promiſes* then the former, whereby we have a title to a celeſtiall, not an earthly inheritance, whereof he is the Lord, and to which he hath engaged himſelf to be our Conductour.

And indeed *Moſes* and *Elias*, who were never called the Sons of God, much leſs by a voice from heaven ſo termed, appearing now with our Saviour in glory, it was a notable ſign that He ſhould be taken up to a far greater glory then theirs, and have power of changing men into ſuch a condition as that wherein he was now transfigured; and in the mean time ſhould preach that life and immortality, which they ſaw conferred upon thoſe two perſons to honour him.

Whom the Diſciples, you may obſerve again, ſaw in a glory ſo much greater then the Law-giver himſelf now had, that if the voice from heaven had been ſilent, it would have been an argument our Saviour ſhould be the Lord of glory; For when they deſired to make their abode there, and for that purpoſe to

build three Tabernacles, they ſay, *one for thee, and one for Moſes, and one for Elias*; putting him in the firſt place before the other two: which they would not ſure have done, had not *Moſes* and *Elias* done reverence to him as a greater perſon then themſelves.

I ſhall end this with a Tradition among the *Hebrews*, which, if it ſignifie any thing, may ſerve to ſhew that *Jeſus* is their long-expected *Chriſt*. For R. *Bechai* ſaith *, that when *Jacob* ſpeaks of the *coming of Schilo*, he comprehends not onely the laſt Redeemer, (the *Meſſiah*,) but the firſt Redeemer alſo, *i. e. Moſes*, who ſhall have the honour then to attend upon the *Meſſiah*, and enter into the holy land: according to what the Maſters ſay upon xv. *Exod.* 1. where the words are, *then Moſes* שיר *ſhall ſing*. And in the great Commentary upon *Deuteronomy* they write, (as the ſame Authour goes on,) that *God ſaid to Moſes*, *Becauſe thou didſt give thy life for them in this world*, (deſiring that God would blot his name out of the book of life, to preſerve theirs,) *in the world to come*, *i.e.* the days of the *Meſſiah*, *when I ſhall bring Elias to them*, *you two ſhall enter in together.*

* *in* xlix. *Gen.* 10.

ther. Which may possibly be the meaning of those words i. *Joh.* 21. *Art thou Elias? and he said, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? i. e. Moses*, who alone was worthy of the name of ὁ Προφήτης, *the Prophet*, above all others. Now if there were any ground of such expectation, that these two should come in their own persons, you see it here fulfilled on this holy Mount; where *Moses*, who was so much in mount *Horeb*, and *Elias*, who used mount *Carmel*, now appeared, and had communication with him about his ἔξοδον departure out of this world, unto his heavenly Kingdome. ix. *Luk.* 31.

The Mount where they met, and where *Jesus* was transfigured, is generally believed to be *Tabor*; as *Hermon*, a little hill near *Jordan*, there is a tradition, was the place from whence *Elias* was taken up to heaven. In these two Mountains, saies *Proclus* *, our Lord *Jesus* was proclaimed the *Beloved Son of God*, from whom we may expect immortall bliss. At *Hermon*, when he was baptized in *Jordan*; on *Tabor*, when he was transfigured, and appeared in a glory as much greater then *Elias*'s, as the high mountain *Tabor* was above the little hill of *Hermon*. And so

* *Orat.* viii.

was fulfilled, ſays he, that prophecie of the Pſalmiſt, lxxxix. 12. *Tabor and Hermon ſhall rejoyce in thy Name.* In both places was publiſhed this joyfull news, that God had ſent his Son to be the Saviour of the World. Firſt in the mount from whence *Elias* was tranſported into heaven; and then in the mount where he came to attend on our Lord when he was transfigured, God the Father, βεβαιῶν ὑιόν, confirming his Sonſhip, proclaimed again with a loud voice, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed; hear him.* For he that heareth him, heareth me, as *Proclus* there gloſſes; and he that is aſhamed of him and his words, of him will I be aſhamed in my glory.

Let us liſten to him therefore: and ſince we hear him ſay, as I noted before, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death unto life;* (v. *Joh.* 24.) let us take it for as expreſs a declaration from God the Father, as if that voice which required them to hear *Jeſus* had ſaid, *You that are obedient to my Son have everlaſting life, and are in no danger to periſh,*

being

being tranſlated from the dominion of death to be heirs of life.

II. And now from the conſideration of the words that were ſpoken, let us paſs to the manner wherein they were delivered: which is ſo vaſtly different from that wherein God ſpake formerly to *Moſes* and the children of *Iſrael* from another mountain, that I cannot but think it was intended to ſignifie ſomething of the grace of *Eternall Life*, which *Jeſus* brings to us. When he was transfigured, and his face ſhone as the Sun, the Evangeliſt tells us moreover, that his *raiment became gliſtering, exceeding white as ſnow*, and that *a bright cloud alſo overſhadowed them*, out of which the voice before named came, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son*, &c. Which, if it be compared with former divine Manifeſtations of the ſame kind, we may reaſonably look upon as an indication, that this Perſon came to diſcover (1.) ſomething more glorious then *Moſes* had done, and (2.) ſomething that expreſſes more abundant love and kindneſs of God towards men; which is nothing elſe but *Eternall Life*.

First, I say, something more glorious and resplendent, or, as the Apostle speaks, 2 *Cor.* iv. 6. *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God*, which we behold *in the face of Jesus Christ*. For the Mount to which *Moses* went up, and where he and the people heard God speak to them, was all covered with *clouds and thick darkness*. Thus God himself told him beforehand he would appear. xix. *Exod.* 9. And so he did when the day prefixed for it came: vers. 16, 18. Unto that *thick darkness Moses* drew near; xx. 21. And the people also stood underneath the mountain, beholding it burn with fire into the midst of heaven, *with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.* iv. *Deut.* 11. xix. *Exod.* 17. All which places the Reader may be pleased to consult; together with xxiv. *Exod.* 18. where we find that *Moses* went into the midst of this cloud, and there was covered and quite obscured from their sight. A very fit emblem of the obscurity of the knowledge which they then had of God and of his will; and of the terrours of the Law, which was *a ministration of death*, as the Apostle speaks, and so astonished them with the thunders and lightning, which came out of the cloud, that they

fled

fled and *ſtood afar off.* xx. *Exod.* 18. As on the other ſide, God appearing now to our Saviour in a quite contrary manner, on the top of another Mountain, where there was no black cloud, (though it was in the night,) no ſmoak or ſulphureous vapour, much leſs a thick darkneſs hiding him from his Diſciples ſight, nothing but a bright and lightſome cloud which overſhadowed them, and ſhewed them the glory wherein he ſhone; it was a lively repreſentation of the *light* which he (*the Light of the world*) came to *give to them that ſate in darkneſs and in the ſhadow of death*, and of the glory and bliſs whereof he was the Miniſter; unto which he invited mankind in words of grace and ſweetneſs, as he did his Diſciples to ſtay here on the mountain by thoſe chearfull beams wherewith the glory of the Lord ſurrounded them.

For this manner of appearing (as I ſaid *Secondly*) plainly ſuggeſts ſome greater manifeſtation of the love and kindneſs, the goodneſs and bounty of Heaven to mankind, then had been made before in that way of revelation to *Moſes*, which was ſo much different from the ſweetneſs and amiableneſs of this. When *Moſes* converſed

converſed with God upon mount *Sinai*, he deſcended thither in Fire, as the places before mentioned tell you; *And the ſight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire, in the eyes of the children of Iſrael.* xxiv. *Exod.* 17. v. *Deut.*22,23. But when our Bleſſed Lord took his Apoſtles with him to a ſight of the Divine Glory, there was onely the appearance of a wonderfull bright and chearful light; ſome mild rays from heaven, which had nothing of terrour in them, but raviſhed them with joy to find themſelves in ſo glorious a Preſence. And therefore they were not left at the foot of this *high mountain*, as *Moſes* left the *Iſraelites* at the bottom of the other; but he *brought them up* with him. xvii. *Matth.* 1. And they were not put into a fright, as the *Iſraelites* were, who removed their ſtation at the ſight of the fire on mount *Sinai*; nor did they ſhriek, as their Forefathers did there, who cried out, ſaying, *Why ſhould we die? for this great fire will conſume us; if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, we ſhall die. Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God ſpeak with us, leſt we die.* v. *Deuter.* 25. xx. *Exod.* 19. But they were raviſhed out of themſelves with the glory of this ſight; which was ſo inviting to their

their eyes, that they wiſht for no other ſtation, but deſired to remain perpetually fixed there. They were ſo far from running away, that they ſaid, *Let us make here three Tabernacles*; as if they meant to pitch there the place of their abode, and never take their eyes from ſo beautifull a Light.

It is obſervable alſo, that in the dark Mountain where *Moſes* was, together with the fire and thunder and lightnings, there was the *noiſe of a Trumpet exceeding loud*; which made not onely *all the people tremble*, but *the whole mount quaked greatly*. xix. *Exod.* 16, 18. And God ſpake likewiſe to the people *with a great voice*; (v. *Deut.* 22.) wherewith both they were ſo aſtoniſhed as to wiſh never to hear it more, and *Moſes* himſelf alſo (ſo terrible was the ſight together with the noiſe) *ſaid, I exceedingly fear and quake.* xii. *Heb.* 21. Whereas on the Mountain where our Lord was transfigured there was not one ſuch frightfull flaſh, nor the leaſt dreadfull ſound; nothing but his own gliſtering Body, the ſplendour of *Moſes* and *Elias*, the brightneſs of a heavenly cloud, and this one ſweet voice, which proclaimed nothing but love and grace in their ears,

ears, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed; hear him.*

St. *Matthew* indeed tells us that, when the Diſciples *heard, they fell on their faces, and were ſore afraid:* xvii. 6. But this doth not ſignify that they were ſeiſed with any horrour at the dreadfulneſs of the ſound; but onely amazed at the ſuddenneſs of the voice, and the marvellous ſplendour of the Light. And therefore the other Evangeliſts do not mention any ſuch terrour after the voice; which, being accompanied with a glory they had never beheld, might well amaze them, but did not make them tremble. The very apparition of Angels was wont to be ſo ſurpriſing as to dazzle mens eyes, and make them bow their faces to the ground. xxiv. *Luk.* 5. And therefore ſuch a glorious ſplendour as this, equalling that of the Sun, might well make the Apoſtles fall proſtrate upon the earth, in great fear or amazement. But then our Lord preſently came and comforted them by a gracious touch, bidding them *ariſe, and not be afraid*, though they ſaw ſuch a light, and heard ſuch a voice as this: to which indeed they had not been accuſtomed, but was the moſt amiable, and ought to be

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the moſt welcome, of any that could ſalute the eyes and ears of mankind.

St. *Mark*, it is obſervable, ſays that, before this voice came out of the heavenly glory, *they were ſore afraid*; ix. 6. *i. e.* were ſo amazed at ſuch an unwonted ſight, or, as *Proclus* * calls it, τὸ παράδοξον τῆς θείας ἐλλάμψεως, the ſtrangeneſs and unexpectedneſs of the Divine Brightneſs ſhining on them, that it put them quite beſide themſelves. But that it was a ſweet mixture of thoſe devout paſſions, *fear* and *joy*, is manifeſt from the foregoing verſe, with which thoſe words cohere: where you reade, they were ſo delighted and raviſhed with the ſight, that they thought not of going down from thence any more; but were projecting for their perpetuall habitation in that happy place. Which Rapture ſeems to have been a foretaſte of the joy which they were to expect, when he ſhould aſcend to that glorious ſtate, which was now repreſented in his Transfiguration on the Mount.

* *Orat.* viii. *in Transfigur. Domini.*

Before I conclude this, I ſhall here take notice, as I paſs to what remains, of ſomething that may help to prove, our Lord

Lord *Jeſus* is the perſon by whom God always intended to ſpeak his mind to the World. For it was at this very time (when the *Iſraelites*, by reaſon of the terrible ſights and thundring noiſes, deſired God they might hear his voice no more,) that he promiſed to ſpeak to them by ſuch a Prophet as *Moſes*, and in a more familiar manner; requiring them to hear that perſon, when he came and ſpake, as they themſelves deſired. So you reade xviii. *Deut.* 15, 16, 17, 18. where, when they ſay, *Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me ſee this great fire any more, that I die not*; the Lord ſaid, *They have well ſpoken, I will raiſe them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and I will put my word in his mouth, and he ſhall ſpeak unto them all that I have commanded him.* Which was *perfectly* fulfilled in our Bleſſed Saviour, (whatſoever leſſer meaning it might have before,) who *ſpake the words of God*, and *not of himſelf, but as the Father gave him commandment*; and was a Prophet like to *Moſes*, as in other regards, ſo in this, that he was with God upon the Mount, heard him ſpeak there to theſe *Iſraelites* his Diſciples, is commended to them as the perſon they ſhould

hear;

hear; but in a voice ſo ſweet and in a way ſo agreeable, that they did not wiſh never to hear it more, but rather always to be ſo happy, as to have ſuch friendly converſe with Heaven, and receive ſuch tokens of God's Fatherly love.

For as the fire and ſmoak and darkneſs, together with thoſe terrible noiſes, were teſtimonies from God to *Moſes*, that they who would not *hear him*, but tranſgreſſed his Laws, ſhould be the objects of his dreadfull diſpleaſure, and be deſtroyed from among their neighbours: So this univerſall light and brightneſs which ſmiled on them, in the cloud and in his raiment, and in his countenance and in his company, when theſe gracious words ſounded in their ears, were moſt manifeſt tokens from heaven of the extraordinary favour of God towards thoſe that obey the Lord *Jeſus*; who ſhall be ſaved from death, and made exceeding happy and glorious.

The far greater part of the Precepts of the Law being negative, as is evident even from the Ten Commandments, (to ſay nothing of the computation which the *Jews* have made of the whole,) it abounds

abounds more with Threatnings and fearfull denunciations of Judgement, then it doth with gracious and inviting Promiſes. But moſt of the Precepts of the Goſpell being affirmative, obliging us to doe all the good we can, and to be *abundant in the work of our Lord*; you reade therefore more frequently of exceeding great and precious Promiſes to incourage our *labour of love*, then of Threatnings to deterr us from evill doing. And conſonant to this, as that frightfull appearance of old on Mount *Sinai*, was to ſhew God's anger and fiery indignation againſt offenders: ſo this comfortable Preſence now on Mount *Tabor*, was to repreſent his loving-kindneſs and tender mercy to all obedient perſons. And as the anger of God, declared by the fire and ſmoak, was his inflicting *Death* upon them: ſo his good will, declared by this friendly light and clearneſs in the heavens, is his beſtowing upon us *Life*. And as by the former *Moſes* was noted by God to be the Miniſter of death to all tranſgreſſours: ſo our *Lord* was hereby repreſented as the Miniſter of Life and Righteouſneſs to all that in him live godly.

Now

Now that all theſe Obſervations are not the product of mere fancy, but have ſome reall truth in them, this is none of the leaſt arguments; That the *Jews* themſelves* make it a Queſtion worth the anſwering, *why God uttered his voice to Moſes out of the midſt of the fire and darkneſs, and not rather out of the midſt of light.* Which is a plain acknowledgment of the nobleneſs and perfection of this way wherein God manifeſted himſelf upon the *Holy Mount*, (as St. *Peter* calls it,) and that it was far more deſirable then that wherein he appeared to *Moſes*; elſe they would not have moved this doubt, and endeavoured ſo laborioufly to ſolve it: pretending that it was onely to ſhew in what a diſmall condition they were without the Law, which was not to be ſent till after forty days were paſt; during all which time *the Court of the heavenly King was hung with black, and not with white.* Which as it is a frivolous conceit, ſo hath no truth in it. For God ſpake the *Ten Words* or Commandments out of the fire and ſmoak, before *Moſes* went to ſtay in the Mount forty days; where he onely received the pattern of God's Houſe (which he was to make) and all belonging to it, together with the Two Tables

* *Pirke Eliezer c.* xl.

whereon thoſe X Commandments were engraven. All the reſt of the Laws were ſpoken to him out of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, after he had built it: (i. *Levit.* 1.) and we do not find then *the heavens hung with white*, (to uſe their phraſe,) as they were now when he ſpake concerning our Saviour, and bad his diſciples *hear him.*

But I intend not to trouble my ſelf with confuting their idle fancies. The uſe that I make of this Queſtion is, That if they would have thought it a diſparagement to their Maſter *Moſes*, (did they not ſatisfie themſelves with this ridiculous reaſon for it,) to be ſpoken unto after ſuch a manner as the Scripture of truth relates; then, by their own confeſſion, it is a great honour to our Lord and Maſter, and argues his high dignity, that the Divine Majeſty ſpake to him in ſuch a way as they cannot but eſteem moſt perfect, and agreeable to his Divine Goodneſs. And we may look upon this pure Light (in which God is ſaid to dwell) as a ſign that Heaven was to be opened by this Perſon, and that he would reſtore us to the Glory of God, of which we were all faln ſhort; and bring man-

mankind to that joy and ſatisfaction of heart, which the Diſciples began to feel in themſelves at this moſt comfortable ſight.

And I make no queſtion, had not the holy Books told us ſo expreſly, that God ſpake to them in clouds and fire and vapour, they would have fabled that he appeared to their Maſter in pure light, and ſhone about him in the brightneſs of his glory, without the leaſt darkneſs to obſcure it. For I find that many of thoſe things which the holy Story of the New Teſtament reports in honour of *John Baptiſt* or of our Bleſſed Saviour, they have thruſt into the Story of *Moſes*, (where he himſelf in his Books hath not confeſſed the contrary,) to keep him in the greater credit with their Nation in this time of their calamitous deſertion. It being recorded, for example, that *John Baptiſt* was born when his parents were very old, and could not believe it was poſſible for them to have a child; (which makes his birth a wonder, being out of the courſe of Nature;) they have made bold to tell the ſame of *Moſes*, (but with a large addition of years,) whoſe mother *Jochebed*, they ſay, was no leſs then an

hundred and thirty years old when ſhe was delivered of him: which *Aben Ezra*, in his Notes upon the text *, is deſirous ſhould paſs for a current truth. And as we reade that, when our Saviour came into the world, the *Glory of the* LORD (an exceeding great light from heaven) ſhone round about the ſhepherds who had the firſt news of it; (which was intended as a note of his Divinity and heavenly deſcent:) So they have deviſed * that, at the Nativity of *Moſes*, the houſe where he was born was filled with ſuch a light, that they could not ſee by reaſon of its ſplendour.

* A. Ezra *in* ii. Exod. ver. 1.

* R. Solomon *in* ii. *Exod.* 3.

In like manner the Apoſtle proves our Lord to be greater then the Angels, far above all principality and power, &c. (i. *Heb.* 3,4. i. *Eph.* 19, 20.) and therefore *Moſes*, forſooth, muſt be raiſed to this wondrous pitch; whom ſome of their Rabbins (all are not ſo immodeſt) will have to be higher מלאכים השרת then the *Angels of Miniſtry*; far above all creatures (as another expreſſes it) *both ſuperiour and inferiour*. As if they meant to equall him with that great Lord who we believe is raiſed far above every name that is named, *not onely in this world, but alſo in*

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in that which is to come. And becauſe alſo our Lord we affirm, and are ſure, is now the *Miniſter of the heavenly Sanctuary*, where he preſents his own bloud before God for us, as *Aaron* did the bloud of beaſts in the earthly Sanctuary: therefore they likewiſe have feigned (as *Maimonides* relates from the mouth of their Doctours*) that their Maſter *Moſes* is not dead, but aſcended, ומשמש במרום *and miniſters to God in the heavenly places.* And becauſe our Lord is here ſaid to be transfigured on this Mountain, and his face ſhone like the Sun: they have therefore transformed *Moſes* alſo; who, they ſay, was found by the Angel of death (whom God ſent to the Mountain whether he was gone up, to take away his life,) writing the great Name of God; *and his face was as the Sun, and he himſelf like an Angel of the Lord.* I have obſerved the ſame before about the *Bath kol* voice from heaven, which ſpake to our Saviour, whoſe glory they ſtudy to eclipſe by ſpreading abroad a number of tales concerning the like approbation given to their Doctours.

* Ludov. Capell. *ex Præfat. in Talm. Not. in* xvii. *Matth.* 3.

I am bold to call theſe reports by that name, and to aſcribe them to that cauſe,

becauſe there are no footſteps of ſuch things in the hiſtory which *Moſes* wrote of himſelf; (who by all juſt ways endeavoured to beget in them a belief that he was a Prophet ſent of God;) and becauſe ſuch inventions might eaſily come into the minds of thoſe obſtinate perſons, who knew not how to confute Chriſtianity, which intereſt and prejudice would not let them receive, but were deſirous by any means, though never ſo falſe, to raiſe *Moſes* to the ſame degree of greatneſs and eſteem with the *Authour and finiſher of our faith.* But it is to be conſidered then, that they ſuppoſe ſuch things to be a notable ſign of the excellency of that perſon to whom they really belong: and conſequently, that our Lord *Jeſus*, who hath theſe very marks upon him which they would ingrave on *Moſes*, being thus deſcribed in thoſe Books that are certainly Divine among us, as clearly as *Moſes* is in any other regards commended in thoſe that are truly holy among them, is a Great Prophet indeed, far greater then *Moſes*, (who never durſt ſay any ſuch thing of himſelf, nor is ſo magnified by any of the ſucceeding Prophets,) the Authour of a better Covenant, and of more divine Promiſes, ſuch as this of

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ETERNALL LIFE; which it is moſt agreeable for him to beſtow, whoſe Kingdom was not in this world, (as *Moſes*'s was,) but he reigns in the other world *Lord of all* for evermore.

III.

To him God the Father hath given a *third* Teſtimony; (unto which it is now time to paſs;) and it is a very expreſs Record of this Truth, that *we have Eternall Life*, and that *it is in his Son.* It is ſet down, you know, in the xii. *Joh.* 28. where, upon our Saviour's requeſt to God that he would glorifie his own Name, a voice from heaven gave this anſwer, *I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again.* The particle (*it*) hath nothing anſwering to it in the *Greek*, but is put in by the Tranſlatours to ſupply the ſenſe. And ſome are of the opinion, that the word σε is to be underſtood, and the meaning to be thus rendred, I have both glorified *thee*, and will glorifie *thee* again. But there is no need of this; we may as well refer the word *glorifie* to *Name*, as our tranſlation doth, and it will come at laſt to the ſame ſenſe: for God's name was glorified by glorifying

ing his Son, as appears from xi. *Joh.* 4. And ſo St. *Cyrill* of *Alexandria* obſerved long ago: Whether the Scripture be, *glorifie thy Son*, or, *glorifie thy Name*, τοῦτον δὲ τὴν τῶν διανοημάτων ἀκρίβειαν, it is all one in exact contemplation of things.

Fragment. L. viii. *in Joh.*

Now if the truth of theſe words be throughly examined, how he *had glorified him*, and how he *would glorifie him again*, we ſhall meet in both with a plain teſtimony that *Eternall Life* is in his Son, to beſtow on us. Let us conſider them briefly apart.

I. As for the former, I find that God had already *glorified* him, before he ſpake theſe words, *three* ways.

1. By his Transfiguration, of which I now diſcourſed; for then St. *Luke* ſaith, ix. 32. *they ſaw his glory.* And that by this *Glory* which they ſaw the Father teſtified he ſhould be made glorious in the heavens, and able to make us ſo; I refer you to what I have ſaid already on this Argument.

2. And I need not uſe many words to ſhew, that he had alſo glorified him very

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ry frequently by the many wonderfull works which he had wrought; for in them it is likewiſe expreſly ſaid, ii. *Joh.* 11. *he manifeſted forth his Glory:* and the multitude were excited by them to magnifie him with Hoſanna's, and to cry out, *Glory in the higheſt.* xix. *Luk.* 37, 38. By theſe alſo he ſhewed the power wherewith he was indued to doe any thing that he had promiſed: and they moved his Diſciples hearts, as you reade in the place now mentioned, (ii. *Joh.* 11.) to *believe on him.*

3. But there was a *third* glorification of him, to which I believe theſe words have a more ſpeciall reference; becauſe it was very famous, and but newly paſſed: Which was his raiſing *Lazarus* from the dead. By this *Jeſus* ſaid expreſly that *glory* ſhould redound to God the Father, and that He, the Son of God, ſhould alſo be *glorified thereby.* xi. *Joh.* 4. For this very end, he there teaches his Diſciples, *Lazarus* fell ſick, and he therefore delayed to go and recover him, (though his great friend,) that there might be a fit opportunity, by the miraculous reſurrection of ſo noted a perſon, (as *Lazarus* was, it appears by the

the coming of ſuch numbers to comfort his ſiſters, verſ. 19.) and in a place ſo nigh to *Jeruſalem*, (verſ. 18.) where the greateſt oppoſition was made againſt him, to doe honour to *Jeſus*; and to make it known, that he aſſumed not more glory to himſelf then God the Father gave him. This was a very great teſtimony from God, that indeed LIFE was in him, and that he did not vainly call himſelf (verſ. 25.) *the reſurrection, and the life*; becauſe he now, with his almighty word, reſtored one to life who had been ſo long dead, that there was no poſſibility of his reviving but by the very LIFE it ſelf.

Hereby he declared that, *as the Father hath Life in himſelf, ſo he hath given the Son to have Life in himſelf.* v. *Joh.* 26. What he had ſaid before in his preaching, he now juſtified by his works; according as he himſelf foretold he would, when he ſaid, *Verily, verily, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God:* ver. 25. The hour which was then coming, yea was juſt at hand, ſeems to be this time when he raiſed *Lazarus* up out of his grave: declaring thereby both the truth of what he had ſaid,

ſaid, (v. *Joh.* 26.) that *he had life in himſelf*; and likewiſe that there would be another hour, (as it preſently there follows ver. 28,29.) wherein all men whatſoever ſhall riſe out of their graves at his voice, *and they that have done good ſhall come forth unto the reſurrection of life*, as *they that have done evill, unto the reſurrection of damnation.* They might well believe it, becauſe he ſaid it who proved himſelf to be *the Truth*, by ſuch works as none could doe but he that was *the Life*.

II. But this is not all that we are to conſider in this Teſtimony of the Father; who doth not onely ſay that he *had* glorified him, but that he *would* glorifie him again: which was done alſo at *three* ſeverall times.

1. At his *Death*, when *many of the graves of the Saints that ſlept were opened.* xxvii. *Matth.* 52. For the very rocks rent, and the earth did quake, and the veil of the temple was torn in ſunder from the top to the bottom, and the Sun refuſed to give its light; and ſuch an amazement came upon the Centurion, who was then upon the guard, that *he glorified God* (xxiii. *Luk.* 47.) by confeſſing that *Jeſus* was

was *a righteous man*, and no pretender to a title that did not belong to him; but, as other Evangeliſts expreſs it, *the Son of God*. To theſe wonderfull things concurring at his death to *glorifie* him and doe him honour, the voice from Heaven ſeems to have had ſome reſpect, becauſe of what follows, ver. 31, 32, 33. *Now ſhall the prince of this world be caſt out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he ſaid, ſignifying what death he ſhould die.* For even now, when he ſeemed moſt weak, he began to tread the Devill under his feet. Now he began to draw not onely the *Jews* to him, but other men, the *Romans* alſo; one of whoſe Captains, in the midſt of his reproach, confeſſed him to be the *Son of God*. The very *opening of the graves* ſerved to adorn the triumph he was about to make over the powers of darkneſs; being a ſign that he had now deſpoiled him *who hath the power of death*, which is the Devill; and that he had *Life in himſelf*, and will give it us, eſpecially now that he hath finiſhed his triumph, and is *glorified* at God's right hand. Of which the rending of the veil alſo was no obſcure token, ſhewing that *we have liberty* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks x. *Heb.* 19.)

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to enter into the Holieſt by the bloud of Jeſus.

It may ſeem indeed an uncouth form of ſpeech, to call his Crucifixion by the name of ὕψωσι, *lifting up* from the earth, or *exaltation:* but one may ſay, and with great truth, that *Chriſt's death upon the Croſs* (as S. *Cyrill* of *Alexandria* ſpeaks) ὕψος ἦν τὸ ἐπὶ δοκείᾳ καὶ δόξῃ τούτων, *was his promotion, contrived for his fame and glory: for he is glorified perpetually for this, having procured many benefits to mankind by its means.* This is one part of the Record of the Father to this Truth, when he ſaid *he would glorifie* our Saviour. Which you ſee was as much as to ſay, He would make it appear, even when he hung upon the Croſs, that he was able to open mens graves, and unlooſe the chains of death, and in due time raiſe them up to everlaſting life. For, *Fragment. L. viii. in Joh.*

2. God farther *glorified* him at his *Reſurrection*; which was attended with the reſurrection of the dead bodies of thoſe Saints whoſe graves were opened at his death. xxvii. *Matth.* 52, 53. There were ſeverall witneſſes of this in *Jeruſalem*, to whom thoſe perſons deceaſed appeared;

as

as there were of his own reſurrection, which was atteſted by choſen perſons to whom he ſhewed himſelf openly. And then he was *lifted up from the earth* in another more noble and ſublime ſenſe, then he had been before upon the Croſs. Then Angels came in bright array to teſtify to him what he had ſaid of himſelf, xiii. *Joh.* 31, 32. that God, having *been glorified in him, had glorified him in himſelf.* This was a very glorious teſtimony that indeed he *hath Life in himſelf*, and ſhall be the Authour of eternal Life to us. And therefore he is called *the Prince* (or Authour) *of life*, iii. *Act.* 15. becauſe by *that which overcame death* (his reſurrection) γινώσκο

* *S.* Cyril. *ib. in* xii. *Joh.* 28. αὐτὸν ὄντα ζωὴν, &c *. *we know him to be* LIFE, *and the Son of the living God.* But of this more hereafter.

3. Another Act whereby this ſaying (*I will glorifie thee again*) was verified, I take to be *his Exaltation* by God's own right hand to the throne of glory in the heavens. This he prayed for with the greateſt ardency and the moſt aſſured expectation, xvii. *Joh.* 1, 2. becauſe God the Father, he ſaith, *had given him power* (*i. e.* the promiſe of it) *over all fleſh, that he might give eternall life to as many as*

God

God had given him. This promiſe, I underſtand it, was made to him when God uttered this voice from heaven, *I have both glorified thee, and will glorifie thee again.* Then God *gave him a power* to raiſe up all, as he had lately done *Lazarus*, and to give them immortall happineſs: of which as he had then the grant, ſo he now deſires in this prayer to be put in poſſeſſion. And therefore when he ſays verſ. 1. *Father, the hour is come; glorifie thy Son*, &c. I take the meaning to be as if he had thus ſpoke, Now is the time to doe that which thy voice from heaven aſſured me ſhould be done, *viz.* to *glorifie me* in ſo compleat a manner, that I may *glorifie thee*, and give eternall life to all the faithfull. This he ſpake with *eyes lifted up to heaven*, from whence that voice came, which bare witneſs of him that he ſhould be glorified more then ever, and gave him authority to lay claim to the higheſt power, of beſtowing immortality.

Which power when God the Father had actually put into his hands, according to this prayer and his own promiſe, (of which he could not fail, having ingaged himſelf before a multitude *to glorifie him*,) then,

then, *being made perfect, he became the Authour of eternall Salvation to them that obey him.* v. *Heb.* 9. Then he was *made a Prieſt for ever,* (vii. 16, 17.) *not after the Law,* which was but a weak inſtitution, but *after the power of an endleſs Life:* whereby he is *able to ſave them to the uttermoſt that come unto God by him.* He can raiſe up us, and all that ſucceed us, as well as he did *Lazarus* and others: in whom he gave onely a little taſte of his power to give us Life, that ſhall never die.

This now is the *Third* Teſtimony of the Father, who, in the audience both of Friends and Strangers, ſaid, *He had both glorified him, and would glorifie him again.* That he *had,* was then very well known; and it was as certain (becauſe he ſaid it) that he *would* doe the ſame again. By the teſtimony alſo of ſufficient perſons it appears, that he made good this promiſe, even at his Death; after which he raiſed him out of his grave, and lift him up far above all heavens: that he may *be glorified* once more (2 *Theſſ.* i. 10.) by raiſing us up from the dead, and promoting us to eternall glory with himſelf.

O won-

O wonderfull News! He that was lifted up to hang on a Croſs, is preferred now from his grave to a glorious throne! And to come at it, he takes a journey through the air! the clouds running under his feet become his chariot! the ſky opens to him, and the heavens with open arms receive him! the troups of Angels joyn together in triumphall Songs; and perſuade his amazed Diſciples to keep that day a feſtivall on earth, as they did in heaven! Do not ſtand gazing here, ſay they, any longer, but go and preach this wonder to the world. By his departure, repreſent his coming again: for ſo ſhall he come, in like manner as ye have ſeen him go into heaven. Athanaſius in Aſſumption. Chriſti.

O how wonderfull are thy works, O Lord! which give us hope (as the bleſſed St. Paul ſaid when he thought of theſe things) that we ſhall then be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and ſo ſhall we be ever with the Lord. We can doe no leſs then, to thoſe voices which came ſo oft from heaven to teſtifie this, adde our poor voice of praiſe and thanksgiving; ſaying with the Angels, when He came into the world, GLORY BE TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST; *and with the multi-*

tude when they met him at mount Olivet, Bleſſed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord, PEACE IN HEAVEN, AND GLORY IN THE HIGHEST. Glory be to him who is the Fountain of Life, coming from the Fountain of Life, the Father. Glory be to him who is the River of God, proceeding from the Divine Abyſs, and inſeparably one with it: the Treaſure of the Father's Goodneſs, and of ever-ſpringing Bleſſedneſs: the Water of life, who gives Life to the World: the increated beam of the Father of Lights, from whom he is undivided: who being in the form of God, took on him the form of a Servant; not leſſening the dignity of his Divinity, but ſanctifying the maſs of our Humanity.

Cyrill. Hieroſ. in occurſ. Domini.

Him the Angels praiſe, the Archangels worſhip, the Authorities reverence, the Powers glorifie; the Cherubims doe him ſervice; the Seraphims acknowledge his Divinity; the Sun and Moon miniſter to him: who hath broken in pieces the gates of Hell, and opened the gates of Heaven, and aboliſhed Death, and confounded the Devill, and diſſolved the Curſe, and made Sorrow ceaſe, and trodden Sin under foot, and reſtored the Creation, and inlightened the World.

World. And therefore let us ſing hymns to him with the Angels, and rejoyce in the light of the glory of God with the Shepherds, and adore him with the Wiſe men, and joyfully magnifie him with the bleſſed Virgin, and confeſs him with Simeon *and* Anna, *who were glad to ſee his Salvation: that ſo we at laſt may alſo be poſſeſſed of eternall good things, through the grace and the bowels of mercy, and the loving-kindneſs of our Lord and God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

Chap. VII.

Concerning the Testimony of the WORD, *the Second Witness in Heaven.*

IF we had no farther Witness of this Truth but that which hath been already produced, we might well rejoyce in the comfort which God the Father hath given us; and rely upon *Jesus* as the Authour of *Eternall Life* to all those that obey him. The testimony of worthy men, as the Apostle here observes, is readily received by us: and therefore we ought to be afraid of being so rudely prophane as to reject the testimony of God; which is of far greater weight then theirs, and hath been solemnly given, you see, more then once for the confirmation of our Faith. But God the Father, *willing more abundantly to shew* (if I may borrow those words in vi. *Heb.* 17.) *unto the heirs of* this *promise the immutability of his counsel*, hath graciously vouchsafed us farther assurance; and by his WORD hath

told us as much, as *He* himſelf declared by thoſe voices from heaven.

CHAP. VII.

What we are to underſtand by the WORD in this place, I have ſhewn in the Former Treatiſe, *viz.* the Lord *Jeſus* himſelf, God-Man, or *God the WORD made fleſh*; who, as S. *Athanaſius* ſpeaks, is Ἐξηγητὴς καὶ Ἄγγελος τῆς ἰδίας Πατρός, *The Interpreter and Embaſſadour of his own Father. For as by the word a man ſpeaks to underſtand his Mind, which is the fountain from whence it comes; ſo (but by a more lively repreſentation, and after an incomparably more excellent manner) we beholding the power of the WORD, come to the knowledge of his Father; as our Saviour himſelf ſaith, xiv. Joh. 9. He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father alſo.* From him this Eternall WORD came down and was incarnate, not onely to reveal his will, but to die for our Sins, and to ſeal what he had preached with his Bloud. After which God raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the Heavens; from whence he teſtified as loudly that he hath in him ETERNALL LIFE for us, as he did that he is the SON OF GOD. This *Witneſs* therefore let us now examine, and look over

Orat. contra Gentes, p. 49.

again the old Evidences which we formerly searched; wherein I doubt not, we shall find this Truth most clearly contained. And the Testimony of the WORD, you know, as well as that of the FATHER, was *threefold*; once to St. *Stephen*, a second time to St. *Paul*, and a third to this beloved Disciple St. *John*.

I.

For the First of these, it stands upon record in so many words, that St. *Stephen* being full of the Holy Ghost, and looking up stedfastly to heaven, *saw the heavens opened, and beheld the glory of God, and Jesus standing at his right hand.* vii. *Act.* 55, 56. Thus he declares, not to some simple people, who perhaps might believe him for his confidence, but to the great Councill of *Jerusalem*, who he knew were very much disaffected, nay perfectly opposite, to this truth. To them he protests in open Court, when he was upon his triall, and bids them mark it, (*Ecce*, *Behold*, take notice of what I now tell you,) *I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* And he said it, though he knew he stood in certain perill of his life for

this declaration. It was for no other reaſon that *Jeſus* himſelf was put to death, but becauſe he ſaid He was the *Son of God*; and that they ſhould *ſee the Son of man ſitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.* And therefore for him to confirm ſo peremptorily this odious Truth, after they had killed Him, and thereby make them guilty of innocent bloud, yea of the bloud of their great King, was a Crime he might well expect they would puniſh with as great ſeverity as was in their power to expreſs: which we may be confident he would never have provoked, had he not been ſo ſure of the Glory of our Saviour, that he could not hold his peace. For who is there ſo frantick, as to expoſe himſelf to death for ſuch an unprofitable lie? It is not in the nature of man to ſuffer ſo ſhamefully as he did in his own perſon, merely to bring a little falſe honour to another. To fanſy a perſon of his Wiſedom guilty of ſuch madneſs, is a kind of diſtraction in him that ſuppoſes it: who, were he ſober, would be taught otherwiſe by the abhorrence he feels in himſelf to throw away his life for a trifle.

Since

Since there is not the least reason then to question, but that this Holy man beheld *the glory of God, and Jesus standing at his right hand*, (*i. e.* the gates of Heaven being set open, that he might have the favour to look into the celestiall palace, the *Majesty of God* was there represented to him sitting on a Throne, as it used to be in the prophetical Visions; and he beheld the Lord *Jesus* the very next person to the Divine Majesty:) we may clearly see in this Vision both the things that St. *John* here asserts, *viz.* that Eternall Life is in *Jesus* the Son of God, to give to those that effectually believe on his Name.

1. As for the first, the *power* wherewith he is invested to give Eternall LIFE, it is visible from his *standing at God's right hand*: which denotes his Omnipotent Virtue to effect what he pleases. For by the *right hand of God Jesus* himself was exalted to the right hand of power, as you reade it. *Act.* 33. v. 31. and therefore being placed there, it signifies that he can doe for us what God hath done for him; that is, exalt us to the like glory in the heavens where he is. And as this is a clear proof of one of the

things

things here recorded, that *LIFE is in him*; so the other.

II. That God hath given the faithfull a right to this Eternall LIFE with him, and that he *will* bestow it on us, is no less evident from the very End of this Vision. For we can see no other reason of this glorious appearance of our Saviour to him, but to incourage him in his preaching, and incite him to witness a good confession, as he himself had done before this great Councill and before *Pontius Pilate*; in hope that if it cost him his life, as it had done our Saviour, he should live and reign with him in that glorious place where he now beheld him. This was the purpose of the heavenly WORD's coming now to him, that he might not doubt of his promises, nor shrink in the least from what he had preached, though he should die for it; which would doe him no greater harm then to dispatch him presently to the celestiall habitations. In the very beginning of this history we reade, that he had no sooner heard the Indictment read which they had drawn up against him, but, before he spake a word for himself, the whole Council *beheld his face as it had been the face of an Angel.*

Angel. vi. *Act.* 15. There appeared, that is, ſuch a bright and ſweet Majeſty in his countenance, as made him look like one of the celeſtial inhabitants, who had already prevented the glorious ſtate to which he was going. And his Anſwer to their charge being ended, their barbarous rage was not more apparent, then it was that the heavens opened to *receive his Spirit*, and let it into the dwelling of God, as ſoon as he ſhould put off his mortality.

There he beheld *Jeſus ſtanding* (whereas he is commonly repreſented as *ſitting*) *at God's right hand*; that he might know, He was ready to meet his Spirit, and entertain it into his heavenly manſions; as well as that He was coming to deſtroy his perſecutors, and put an end to their power and nation. And he ſaw alſo the *Glory of God*, as the Crown he ſhould win by his Martyrdom: which had as ſenſible an effect upon his heart for the confirming of his faith and conſtancy, as if he had heard the Almighty call to him and ſay, Μὴ δειλιᾶς ἀνὴρ, ὁ Στέφανε, *Be not faint-hearted, O Stephen, nor ſuffer any degenerous thoughts to enter into thy breaſt. Though there is no man to ſtand by thee,*

no

no Friend on earth to aſſiſt thee in this diſtreſſed ſeaſon; yet I with my beloved Son behold what is a doing. A happy Reſt and repoſe is ready for thee. The gates of Paradiſe ſtand wide open to thee. Have patience a while, and, leaving this temporary life, make haſt to that which is eternall. Still thou ſeeſt God is in humane Nature; a thing beyond all worldly thoughts. Thou haſt been taught by the Apoſtles, that the Father hath a genuine beloved Son: behold, I ſhew him to thee, as much as thou canſt bear. And he ſtands at my right hand; that by the very ſite of the place thou mayſt know the dignity he hath. It was a ſcandall heretofore to many, that God ſhould be on the Earth cloathed with fleſh. But behold him now with me on high in a celeſtiall, ſuperceleſtiall condition, ſtill having the form of man; to confirm thee in the belief of the gracious diſpenſation which is now compleated. Be not diſturbed, be not dejected, though for his ſake thou beeſt ſtoned. Beholding the Diſpenſer of Rewards, do not fear the combate. Forſake thy body, and deſpiſing it as an earthly Priſon, as a ruinous houſe, as a potter's veſſel eaſily broken, come, run hither, being ſet at liberty, to the portion and inheritance here reſerved for thee. For the crown of brave atchievements

is

is ready and expects thee. Step over from the earth to heaven, and take it. Leave thy body to the bloudy murtherers, as a morsel to dogs. Leave the mad inraged multitude, and come to the quire of Angels.

In these words *Asterius* expresses the sense of this heavenly Vision, wherein God shewed himself to this valiant man, that he might not be struck with any fear by the greatness of the danger. For this cause he did not send an Angel to assist him, as to the Apostles in prison, nor any ministring power and fellow-servant, as he speaks; ἀλλ' ἑαυτὸν ἐπιδείκνυσι, but he presented himself; that being the *first-fruits* of the Martyrs, he might leave a noble example to all that followed. And indeed what could more incourage them, then to hear so holy a man departing the world with these words in his mouth, *I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God?* This was a notable Testimony which the heavenly WORD gave, that he was possessed of ETERNALL LIFE; whereby he animated this blessed Martyr, from what he saw Him enjoy, to doe as He had done. Which could have no force in it to perswade him, unless his meaning had been, *Encomium in Pranomart.*

been, that he should no sooner leave the World, but ascend up thither where he was. And so St. *Stephen* understood it; for as they were stoning him (the greatest punishment the *Jews* could inflict) he called upon our Saviour, saying, *Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.* vii. *Act.* 59. He doubted not of audience, when he beheld him who is *sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high,* i. *Heb.* 3. in another posture; not *sitting,* but *standing* there. *What was the business* (to use the words of another ancient Bishop) *that made him rise thus out of his Father's throne? He saw this noble Combatant in his Agony, and rose up to crown his victory. And it was as if he had said, Fear not, Stephen; there is none shall beguile thee of thy reward. I am risen out of my throne, to reach thee my right hand. Beholding me who was crucified, grapple with the danger that presents it self to thee. I am he whom thou sawest hanging on a tree: by virtue of that crucifixion I will reward thee. I preside in these Combats, and deal the Crowns to Conquerours. Fear not therefore those that go about to stone thee; they do but rear thee a ladder, against their wills, to heaven. Do not fear them; the stones will be but as so many steps to that blessed place where thou seest me.*

Proclus *Orat.* xvii.

Nay, It is not for thee to fear the stones, who art built on me the chief Corner-stone; and therefore canst not fare worse then I do, who am in glory for ever and ever.

With such thoughts as these this good Man laid down his life: which is as great an argument as any of this nature can be, that *Jesus* both can and will give *Eternall Life* to his followers. For else a person so full of Wisedom that they were not able to dispute with him, (vi. *Act.* 10.) would not have ventured his life, and endured the worst of deaths, having nothing to comfort him in his agony but onely the hope he had from *Jesus*, that he would *receive his Spirit*. This was it that gave him such boldness and full assurance of faith. With these words in his mouth he would have died, but that he pitied those who did not see as much as he did. Which made him expire in prayer for his persecutours; wishing them no worse, then that they might not be hindred by this sin from believing in *Jesus*, and going thither where he hoped presently to be received.

So the same *Asterius* rightly understands those words, *LORD, lay not this sin*

sin to their charge. He doth not wish them absolute impunity, which had been openly to oppose τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ διάταξιν the Divine Ordinance and constitution, and to correct the judgment and decree of the most Just, who hath appointed a deserved punishment to murtherers; but he begs of God that, notwithstanding this crime, he would give them true compunction, and bring them to repentance. It being as if he had said, *Do not let them die in their uncircumcision. Draw them by repentance to the acknowledgment of thee. Kindle the flame of the Spirit in their hearts. By the means of my bloud let them be converted; that being washed in the laver of thy grace and in thy bloud, they may be delivered from their iniquities.* A most pious conclusion of this bloudy Tragedy; one of the principal Actours in which was presently after so miraculously touched from heaven, that it was visible our Lord had heard the devout prayer of his Martyr in this particular: and therefore had not denied his other request, but received his Spirit also unto himself.

II.

For if any thing could be clearer then this to demonstrate the truth I am endeavouring

vouring to prove, the great love of our moſt Bleſſed Lord would not deny it. Who appear'd again, as I ſhew'd in the former Treatiſe, to a very learned perſon, of great note and great ſanctity among the *Jews*, and as great an enemy to him; being *conſenting* (as he himſelf confeſſes, xxii. *Act.* 20.) *unto his death, when the bloud of his Martyr Stephen was ſhed.* St. *Paul* I mean, who travelling towards *Damaſcus* in a burning rage and fury, and with a ſharp commiſſion, againſt Chriſtians, (and therefore in no fit diſpoſition to receive a truth, or to fall into a fancy directly oppoſite to his preſent temper and intereſt,) was ſuddenly ſurprized with a great light from heaven; and beheld that *Jeſus*, whom he no more thought to be ſo glorious, then he did the Thieves that were crucified with him, preſenting himſelf, and diſtinctly ſpeaking to him, in ſuch a ſplendid manner, that *he fell down to the ground, and could not ſee for the glory of that light:* verſ. 7, 11. Whoſoever will carefully obſerve what he was, and how far, as I ſaid, from any ſuch thoughts, and how deſperately he had been lately ingaged againſt St. *Stephen*, and now was proſecuting other of *Chriſt*'s Diſciples, will eaſily conclude that he had

now a reall ſight of the Majeſty of the Lord *Jeſus* at whoſe feet he fell; whom otherwiſe no man ſhould have deſpiſed and blaſphemed more then He. Now if the Viſion be conſidered, you will find that it contains in it this Truth, that *Jeſus is poſſeſſed of Eternall Life to give unto us*; as well as that he is the *Son of God*. For,

I. He beheld him appearing in ſuch a brightneſs as that before mentioned, far exceeding the ſplendour of the Sun at noon-day, according as he himſelf tells the ſtory, xxvi. *Act.* 13. Which plainly declared him to be the King of Glory, cloathed with the Majeſty of God, and poſſeſſed of an heavenly Kingdom; and therefore *able* to give ETERNALL LIFE to his ſervants: which is one of the things that St. *John* here ſaith God hath teſtified to us. How ſhould he come by ſuch a robe of light, and how ſhould he appear thus, firſt to St. *Stephen*, and now to St. *Paul*, and how ſhould he preſent himſelf thus near to him, and perfectly aſtoniſh his bold ſpirit, if he had not power to doe what he pleaſed? And therefore St. *Paul* is told by our Lord, at this very time when he ſaw him in ſuch Majeſty, that he ſhould *be a witneſs of what he had ſeen*. Which had

had been to no purpoſe, unleſs this Apparition had ſomething remarkable in it, to prove that he was what he pretended to be in his life-time, the Son of God moſt High, whom, according to his word which he paſſed by a voice from heaven, *he had glorified, and given him power over all fleſh.*

II. And accordingly you find that the thing St. *Paul* witneſſed was, that *Jeſus* was *over all, God bleſſed for ever,* (ix. *Rom.* 5.) and had ſent him to preach the *Reſurrection, and everlaſting life.* xiii. *Act.* 46. xvii. 18. Theſe doctrines our Lord himſelf had taught him, when, appearing and ſpeaking to him in ſuch a glorious light, he ſaid, *I am Jeſus.* As much as to ſay, *I am he whom you buffeted; whom you ſcourged; whom you dragged about, firſt to Caiaphas, then to Pilate; whom you called continually the Carpenter's ſon; whom you number among the dead, laughing aloud at thoſe that preach the Reſurrection. It is I that ſpeak: and therefore believe that which my ſervant Stephen ſaw; though when he told you ſo you would not believe it.* Aſterius εἰς τὴν ἀναστασιν Ἀπόστολος, &c.

Thus he learnt, ſaith *Aſterius*, by experience, that *Chriſt* was alive; and was

neither corrupted by death, nor ſtolen away ſecretly by his Diſciples, but riſen from the dead, ἐβασίλευσε πᾶσαν, and reigned over the whole world. This he preached with as great a zeal, as before he perſecuted. He was ſuch an Auxiliary, as before he had been an enemy; ἰσχυρὸς ἀμφότερος, both, ſtrong and reſolute.

III. For you may obſerve, that he did not merely rationally conclude from the glory wherein *Jeſus* was, that all he had ſaid was true, and that he was able to give *Everlaſting Life:* but he heard him alſo ſay expreſly at this time, when he appeared to him, that he would beſtow this celeſtial Inheritance upon us, even *us* Gentiles, who were ſtrangers to the promiſes, foreiners and aliens from the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, having no ſuch hope. There was nothing againſt which the Phariſaicall ſpirit was more imbittered then this, that other Nations ſhould ſhare with them and be equall to them in the bleſſings of the *Meſſiah*. The Religion wherein St. *Paul* had been bred was concerned in no principle more then this, that the reſt of the world were all unclean, and never to be united to them; unleſs they would be circumciſed, and obſerve the

the Law of *Moſes*. And therefore had he not been preſſed with undeniable evidence, he would never have conſented to this truth, which was ſo much againſt the grain of that ſpirit which poſſeſſed him; and which he but once mentioning to his Country-men, they were ready to tear him in pieces. xxii. *Act.* 21, 22. And yet he reports this for a certain Truth from the mouth of *Jeſus* himſelf, who bad him (as he relates this glorious Viſion to *Agrippa*, a Prince well skilled in the Law,) go unto the Gentiles, *to open their eyes*, (as He had done his,) *to turn them from darkneſs unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they might receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and* INHERITANCE *among them that are ſanctified by faith in him.* xxvi. *Act.* 17, 18. And accordingly he went and preached every-where, in obedience to this heavenly Viſion, the comfortable doctrine of the Reſurrection and Eternall Life, to us Gentiles as well as others: *witneſſing both to ſmall and great that*, as the Prophets had foretold, *Chriſt ought to ſuffer, and ſhould be the firſt that ſhould riſe from the dead, and ſhew* LIGHT *unto the people* (of *Iſrael*, that is,) *and to the Gentiles:* verſ. 22, 23. By *Light* in the holy language is meant the

gladſome diſcovery of God's good will and pleaſure. For as by *Darkneſs* it expreſſes ignorance, ſorrow and heavineſs; ſo by its oppoſite, knowledge, joy and chearfulneſs. And the *Light* which we have by *Chriſt*'s ſufferings and riſing from the dead, can be nothing elſe but the bleſſed hope of immortality. This St. *John* tells us is the *light* of mankind: (i. 4. *In him was* LIFE, *and the life was the* LIGHT *of men*; that is, their ſingular comfort and ſatisfaction, which makes their life not to be irkſome to them:) and with this *Light* St. *Paul* endeavoured to fill the world, that they might all know how much they were indebted to *Jeſus, who brought Life and immortality to light by his Goſpell.*

And can it enter into any man's thoughts, that he *would* have ſet himſelf to preach this doctrine of happineſs to us, (which his own people ſo abhorred we ſhould partake of,) if God the WORD had not made him infallibly aſſured of it? Nay, how *could* he have preached it ſo long, unleſs, as he there ſpeaks, he had *obtained help of God*; who countenanced his preaching, and approved this teſtimony of his concerning his Son *Jeſus*, by the mighty

mighty power of the Holy Ghoſt? He himſelf alſo teſtified the ſtrong belief he had of the Reſurrection, and of the Glory that ſhall be revealed, by his labouring ſo abundantly as he did in the work of the Lord; to whom he was deſirous to expreſs an extraordinary affection, becauſe his grace and love had ſo abounded towards him. He thought he could never in the leaſt requite his kindneſs; and therefore would not gain one farthing, not ſo much as a bit of bread, by this preaching: But, though he might have lived by the Goſpel, choſe rather to work with his own hands, to ſupport himſelf and thoſe that were with him; that he might win the more Souls to his Maſter, by making Religion without charge to them. A great argument of his zeal to ſerve his Lord, and promote his honour, and of his firm belief of immortall life, where he deſired onely to have his ſervices rewarded. Which is excellently expreſſed by the forenamed *Aſterius*, when he ſays, that he refuſed ſo ſmall a recompence of his infinite labours, as a daily proviſion for his body, which was ſo often beaten and bruiſed, ἵνα μηδὲν ὧδε γῆς λαβὼν, πάντα ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἀποθῆται, *that receiving nothing upon Earth, he might lay up all in Heaven.*

IV. And therefore you may obſerve, that his ſervice was ſo acceptable to our Saviour, that he gratified him here in this world above our mortall condition: and to give him an earneſt or pledge of the good things to come, and the honour ſhould be done him there, he did him the favour to tranſport him into the *Third heaven*, and another time into *Paradiſe*; where he ſaw Viſions and heard words too glorious for him to utter, or us to underſtand in this preſent ſtate. 2 *Cor.* xii. 3, 4. This was a farther confirmation which the Eternall WORD gave of his power to give *Eternall Life*, and of his intentions to take us up unto himſelf. For he was carried thus above the clouds by the power and favour of *Jeſus*; who hereby bare witneſs to himſelf how glorious he is, and how able to advance his faithfull Diſciples to the ſame height of heavenly felicity. For he ſays it was *a man in Chriſt*, one who by the happineſs of belonging to him had this noble priviledge beſtowed on him: And he gives this as an inſtance of the Viſions and Revelations τῶν Κυρίου of the LORD, (ver. 1.) which is the title of *Jeſus* moſt frequently in the New Teſtament, who *is LORD*

of

of all. x. *Act.* 36. *He* ſnatcht him up into the Heavens. He tranſported him, no body knows how, to the celeſtiall habitations. And either by a πλοῦν, ἢ ἀνάβασιν, ἢ ἀνάλημψιν, (as St. *Greg. Naz.** diſtinguiſhes them,) a rapture of mind in the body, or the aſcenſion of his mind quite out of the body, or the aſſumption of both for a time into thoſe regions above, he let him ſee ſtrange ſights, and hear ſuch words as are not to be ſpoken with our tongues. Which was a very full demonſtration of the Majeſty of our Bleſſed Saviour, and of his ability to tranſlate us to thoſe heavenly places, and of his purpoſes likewiſe to make us at laſt ſo happy.

* *Orat.* ii. περὶ Θεολογίας, p. 550.

Behold here the glory of the Chriſtian Religion, whoſe Authour is ſo highly exalted, that he exalts this Miniſter of his far above the greateſt perſons in former times. *The tranſlation of Elias* (as the often named *Aſterius* ſpeaks*) *out of this world wherein we are, is every-where celebrated as a wonder. But* μέχρι πόσου ἐφόρησε *how far he went, no Revelation hath explained. Perhaps he was not carried very high above the Earth by that power which lifted him up, to the place which was deſtined for his habitation. But the tranſlation*

* *Ib.* ὡς κομψευόμενος Ἀστερίος, &c.

of

of St. Paul was far more illuſtrious and famous; the very place being noted to which he was carried: and that no inferiour one, but almoſt half way to the higheſt heavens of all. Let the Hebrews hereafter ceaſe to pride themſelves in the honour that was done to Moſes; who alone went up to the top of mount Sinai, and was in the midſt of the clouds and darkneſs which appeared there. My Paul, inſtead of a mountain, aſcended into heaven; and inſtead of a cloud, was carried beyond the air that is above the clouds. And very fitly; for it became a Man of Chriſt to outſtrip Moſes as much, as the Old Law was excelled by the Goſpell that St. Paul preached: which he calls *the Myſtery hid from ages and generations, but now made manifeſt to the Saints,* (or Chriſtians) *to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this myſtery among the Gentiles; which is Chriſt in us, the hope of glory.* i. *Col.* 26, 27.

III.

And here now let us leave the hiſtory of this great Man, and paſs to the *Third* Teſtimony which the WORD gave of this truth, to St. *John.* Who as he is the one-

ly

ly perſon that (after the other Evangeliſts had ſet down the genealogy of our Lord according to the fleſh) expounds τὸν ἀναρχον ὕπαρξιν τῦ Θεῦ λόγυ, as *Proclus* * ſpeaks, the Eternall ſubſiſtence without any beginning of God the WORD, and his generation of the Father before all worlds: ſo he hath gathered here together, more clearly then any of the reſt, all the Evidences and grounds of the Chriſtian Faith; and alſo received the moſt full and pregnant demonſtrations of what he hath particularly recorded, concerning *Eternall life in the Son of God.* For when our Bleſſed Lord, (the WORD made fleſh,) whom he beheld aſcending into heaven, appeared to him from thence in a moſt glorious manner, you may obſerve,

* ὡς τὸ ἄχρον Πρόκλ.

I. That he ſufficiently declares his power to doe what he pleaſes, by taking to himſelf that very Name and Title whereby God the Father Almighty ſometimes revealed himſelf to the Prophets. You reade in the xli. *Iſa.* 4. xliv. 6. the Lord, the King of *Iſrael*, and his Redeemer, ſaith, *I am the firſt and the laſt:* which is the very ſame with thoſe words i. *Rev.* 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending,*

ending, ſaith the Lord, &c. thoſe two being the names of the *firſt* and the *laſt* letters in the *Greek* Alphabet, as *A* and *Z* are the firſt and laſt in our Chriſt-croſs-row. Now if you look farther into this book of the *Revelation*, you will find that in this very ſtyle our Bleſſed Lord ſpeaks of himſelf. In the very beginning of the Viſions there recorded, St. *John* heard one call to him with a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ſaying, *I am Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt*: (i. *Rev.* 11.) and turning about to ſee who it was that ſpake to him, our Saviour appeared in the form and ſhape of a King and Prieſt ſhining in glory, as you reade verſ. 12, 13, *&c.* And thus he concludes his Revelation as he had begun: xxii. 13, 16. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end*, &c. *I Jeſus have ſent my Angel to teſtify unto you theſe things in the Churches.* Which is a demonſtrative argument that *Eternall Life* is in him, and that he wants no power to effect any thing he hath promiſed; being equall to the Father Almighty, whoſe Name elſe he would not have aſſumed.

II. And if we examine the ſenſe and meaning of this Name, we ſhall ſtill be farther con-

convinced, that he will undoubtedly imploy his power to beſtow upon us that Eternall Life which is in him. For when the Almighty calls himſelf *the Firſt and the Laſt*, he either declares that he is the ETERNALL, who gave being to all things, and remains after they are all dead and gone: or elſe, (as *Oecolampadius* and *Calvin* underſtand thoſe words in *Iſaiah*,) that he is the IMMUTABLE, from firſt to laſt conſtant to himſelf and his promiſes. Which is the gloſs of R. *Solomon* upon the words; who refers them to the help and aſſiſtence which God would give to the laſt as well as the firſt of *Abraham*'s children. What he had been to *Iſrael*, the ſame he would ſtill be. He had at the firſt taken them to be his people; and therefore in the latter days he would ſtill own them, and ſhew his ſpeciall affection to them.

I ſee no reaſon why theſe two expoſitions ſhould be thought ſo inconſiſtent, as to exclude one the other; when they may both be very well joyned together. And then our Lord intends by the aſſumption of this Title, that St. *John* and all the Chriſtian Churches ſhould look upon him as the Eternall God, able to per-

perpetuate his love and mercy towards them world without end; and as alway the ſame unchangeable Wiſedom and Goodneſs, whoſe mind and will is no more alterable then his power, but remains as firmly fixed as God the Father Almighty doth. So that look what God the Father now is or hath been, or what himſelf hath ever been to the body of his Church; the ſame He will ſtill continue immutably to our endleſs happineſs. If God the Father was, and is, and will be the *Alpha* or beginning; the ſame is He likewiſe. All things come from him to his Church, of which he is the Founder; by him it ſubſiſts and continues; and he hath ſuch a creative power in him, that he can give all bleſſings, even *Life everlaſting*, to it. For though we die, yet he is the *Omega*, who remains ſtill in being after all the world is buried in its ruines; and therefore can quicken our duſt and aſhes, and gather them up to himſelf, and make them glorious. God the Father raiſed him from the dead, and gave him glory: and therefore, ſeeing He hath the ſame power, (as appears by theſe titles,) He can doe as much for us, and give us a glorious reſurrection. In this God the Father faithfully fulfilled the promiſes he had

had made him, of glorifying him with himſelf: and therefore we may be confident he will be as true to us, and make good all the promiſes he hath left us for our incouragement in his obedience; becauſe he is perfectly ſuch as his Father is.

And, to come a little nearer to that interpretation which Rabbi *Solomon* gives of the words of the Prophet, (where this expreſſion is firſt uſed,) our Lord would have us think that, as God the Father Almighty, having begun to ſhew mercy and favour to *Iſrael*, would not fail to go on and continue the ſame kindneſs to the end: ſo He, being likewiſe the ALPHA, having begun, that is, to raiſe himſelf a Church, and to doe great things for it, even to die and purchaſe it with his bloud, would undoubtedly be the OMEGA, finiſh, that is, his own work, and bring that of which he had laid the foundation to an happy concluſion; never ceaſing his kindneſs, till he had perfected his Saints in that Life he had begun to beſtow upon them. Or, as he began in this world to raiſe men from the dead, to beſtow upon them other great benefits, to make them very precious promiſes of greater

greater favours, and to ſeal them with his bloud: ſo he would have them reſt aſſured, he would continue to the end to doe them good, and at the laſt raiſe all his faithfull ſervants from the dead, and take them up to live with himſelf; and in the mean time perform every other promiſe he had made, for their preſent ſatisfaction and ſupport in this troubleſome world. As he died for them, ſo he would have them make account he lived for them; becauſe he is always the ſame, at laſt the very ſame that he was at firſt: And therefore *ſince he lives, they might expect to live alſo.*

III. But he did not leave them merely to draw theſe inferences themſelves from that great Name whereby he now made himſelf known to St. *John*; but immediately, after he had told who he was, he more clearly and particularly declares this very thing, that he hath *Life in himſelf.* For you reade that St. *John*, beholding him in ſuch glory, with a countenance as bright as the Sun when it ſhineth in its ſtrength, (which was a ſight too ſtrong for our weak eyes to look upon, i. *Rev.* 16.) *fell at his feet, as one dead.* He was as much aſtoniſhed at his pre-

preſence, though he knew *Jeſus* loved him; as St. *Paul* was, while he was a perſecutour of him. Which ſhews that our Lord appeared now in a moſt amazing glory; too ſplendid for the capacity of his beſt Friends to endure long, without the danger of ceaſing to be men. For ſo far were thoſe words which our Lord ſpake from giving him life, that, like to thoſe who heretofore beheld the glory of God, he was more aſtoniſhed at what he ſaw, then comforted with what he heard; and thought, it is probable, he ſhould die preſently and give up the ghoſt. But in this trembling fit *Jeſus* was pleaſed graciouſly to approach, and laying his right hand on him, bad him *not fear*, nor let that Majeſty of God which he beheld in him caſt him into ſuch a great conſternation. "It is true indeed, "(ſays he, verſ. 17.) *I am the firſt and the* "*laſt*, as I ſaid before; that is, am in- "veſted with all the power of God, "bearing his Name and Authority: "but there is ſo much comfort in this, "that it ought rather to have tranſpor- "ted thee with joy, then ſtruck thee "with terrour. For (as it there follows, "verſ. 18.) I, who call my ſelf *Alpha* "and *Omega*, the firſt and laſt, *am he that*

" *liveth, and was dead*; I, the very ſame " perſon who loved thee and the reſt of " mankind ſo well as to die for you, and " never made uſe of my power to your " hurt, am riſen from the dead; and af- " ter all my ſufferings (ſuch as you muſt " endure for my ſake) am alive, as thou " ſeeſt, and in a far better condition then " I was before, when thou waſt not thus " afraid of me. Though in my firſt at- " tempt to raiſe a Church I ſuffered death, " and laid the foundation of it in my " bloud: yet it is apparent I have over- " come death, and now live in greater " ſplendour then ever.

If our Lord had ſtopt here, and ſaid no more, this had been ſufficient to convince him of his power to preſent to himſelf a glorious Church; and from the loweſt and moſt afflicted condition, to raiſe it to the greateſt honour here, and to eternall glory in the other world. But he proceeds for the ſtronger confirmation of his faith, and ſays, " *Behold*, more then this, " *I am alive for evermore.* I have *Eternall* " *Life*, and can never loſe this power: " and therefore thou mayſt believe me " when I ſay that I am the *Omega*, whom " thou knoweſt to be the *Alpha*; for I can

" perfect

" perfect what I have undertaken, and
" bring to an happy iſſue all the good I
" have begun to work for you. The
" lateſt poſterity ſhall find that I am a-
" live, and able to promote them to ever-
" laſting bliſs. Fear not, theſe words are
" all true, and therefore I conclude them
" with an *AMEN*; (wherewith I was
" wont, thou mayſt remember, to con-
" firm my ſayings;) that thou mayſt reſt
" aſſured I now ſay nothing but the cer-
" tain indubitable truth, when I tell thee,
" I am he that was dead, and now am
" alive, and that I live for evermore.
" Πῶς ὧν εἶδόν τί σε παθεῖν ἢ κακὸν ἐκ τῆς ὁπτασίας μου;
" (as *Andreas Cæſarienſis* conceives his
" meaning,) How canſt thou imagine
" then that thou art in danger to ſuffer
" any harm by my appearing to thee, ſince
" the power which thou ſeeſt me have
" is to give life, not death, unto my ſer-
" vants? I never uſed, thou mayſt re-
" member, to kill men, but to ſave
" them; and therefore thus thou mayſt
" be confident I will ſtill imploy my om-
" nipotent power; for I *am Alpha and*
" *Omega*, the ſame at laſt that I was at
" firſt: I am come that you might have
" life, and that you might have it more
" abundantly.

" And indeed, as he ſtill goes on, *I* " *have the keys of hell and of death*; or (as " we render the word Ἅδης, here tranſla- " ted *hell*, in 1 *Cor.* xv. 55.) *the keys of* " *the grave and of death.* I can open " the graves, as I did at my death, and " can looſe the bands of death, as I did at " my reſurrection. I can bring you out " of that dark eſtate where no body ſees " you, and reſtore you to life again; " nay, raiſe you to that Light wherein " thou beholdeſt me ſhine.

And here again it is obſervable, that our Saviour takes to himſelf that very power which is aſcribed to Almighty God by *Hannah*; who ſays in her Song, 1 *Sam.* ii. 6. *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.* Whereby he would ſuggeſt to St. *John*, that all things are committed to his truſt, and are in his power: (for that is frequently denoted in the holy language by *Keys*, the badge of a Steward's authority and power in a family:) and therefore it is not too hard for him to overcome the great Conqueror of all men, to open the priſon-doors that have been ſo long ſhut and faſt locked, to looſe the chains of death,

death, and overthrow him quite who hath the power of it, that is, the Devill. But this he would have us ſtedfaſtly believe, and therefore immediately bids him (not lie as a man dead, but get up and) *write the things that thou haſt ſeen:* ver. 19. That is, "Let my Church know that I am "alive, and that I bear the ſame affection "to them that I ever had. Send them "this comfort from me, that I not onely "live, but always live, and have all pow-"er committed to me, even over the "grave and death: ſo that if any man "loſe his life for me, I can give it him a-"gain, with ſuch an increaſe of dignity "and glory as thou ſeeſt me enjoy.

And we muſt needs confeſs that there is an exceeding great comfort in this aſſurance, which he gave thus in his own perſon and with his own mouth to this holy Apoſtle; who knows, as he ſpeaks in another caſe, xix. *Joh.* 35. *that he ſaith true.* For hereby we reſt ſatisfied of one part of the Record which is to be proved, that *Life is in Jeſus*; and ſee moreover much reaſon to believe the other part, that *he intends to beſtow it on us.*

IV. But for a fuller evidence of that, you may conſider, in the laſt place, that this WORD of God gave frequent teſtimonies of it to St. *John* in the following Letters to the Seven Churches of *Aſia*. Where they are ſo obvious, that I may leave it to the moſt careleſs hand to gather them. To one he ſaith, *I will give to him that overcometh to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midſt of the paradiſe of God.* ii. *Rev.* 7. To another, *I will give him a crown of life:* and, *He ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death:* ver. 10, 11. To a third, *I will give him the white Stone*, &c. a certain knowledge and aſſurance, *i. e.* (as I hope to ſhew in another place,) of the promiſed reward: ver. 17. To another, *He ſhall be cloathed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confeſs his name before my Father, and before his angels:* iii. 5. And, to name no more, he promiſes to grant to him that overcometh, *to ſit down with him in his throne:* ver. 21. Which, though it may have ſome reſpect to the high place and dignity he ſhould injoy in the Church in this world, yet, had not its full completion but in the other life; where he will crown the fidelity

lity of all victorious Souls with the greateſt glory and honour.

How can we doubt of it, when we hear ſuch expreſs promiſes of immortall bliſs ſo oft repeated, from the mouth of the WORD of God himſelf, after he went to heaven? Great is our aſſurance, great is the confidence we may take from ſuch a *Record* as this; if we be in the number of thoſe that *overcome:* remain conſtant, that is, and fixed in our Chriſtian reſolution, notwithſtanding any aſſaults that are made upon us, either by the good or bad things of this world, to tempt us to revolt from our duty. For St. *John* ſaw and heard theſe things from the Lord *Jeſus* himſelf, upon his own Day, (the day of his reſurrection from the dead;) and in a glory ſo bright, that it was an emblem of the happineſs he will beſtow upon us; and with ſuch earneſt aſſeverations of their truth and certainty, as are ſufficient to awake the dulleſt and moſt lethargick Souls to attend to what he ſays. For thus he begins his Letter to the Church of *Laodicea*, who were grown ſtrangely chill and indevout, *Theſe things ſaith the Amen, the faithfull and true Witneſs, the beginning of the Creation of God.* iii. 14.

By the name of AMEN, which he gives himſelf, he would have them underſtand, that by him all the promiſes made to the Church ſhall undoubtedly be fulfilled; according to that of St. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* i. 20. *In him all the promiſes of God are Yea, and in him Amen.* "He may "be believed, for he is a *Witneſs* who "affirms and teſtifies nothing but the ve-"ry truth, which can never fail: becauſe "he is the Efficient cauſe of all things, by "whom they were at firſt created, and by "whom mankind is now repaired; and "therefore is the Head of all creatures, "eſpecially of all Chriſtians, who ſhall "riſe again from the dead to immortall "life. So I expound the laſt words, [*the beginning of the Creation of God,*] as *Andreas Cæſarienſis* doth; who takes in both ſenſes of the word Ἀρχὴ, (as I have of the word *Creation*,) which ſignifies not onely *Principium*, the beginning or originall, but *Principatum*, the principality or dominion which the Son of God hath over all creatures, of which he is the Authour. What may we not expect from ſo great a Prince, who hath ſuch an abſolute command over all things? And why ſhould we doubt of his Sovereignty, who

who appeared in ſuch an amazing ſplendour to St. *John*, and proclaimed in theſe and other ſuch like Titles the ſupereminent glory of his Majeſty? Or why ſhould we queſtion his truth, who had approved himſelf ſo many ways *the true and faithfull Witneſs*; eſpecially by ſending the Holy Ghoſt (as you ſhall hear preſently) to bear witneſs to him, according to his promiſe? We ought to rely upon his word; and to *fear* nothing, but leſt we ſhould reject or diſtruſt the teſtimony of a Perſon ſo great and ſo juſt; whoſe power appeared, from his very firſt entrance into the world, to be ſo far tranſcending all creatures, that the Apoſtles might ſee before his aſcenſion to the glory wherein St. *John* beheld him, that as he had the *Words of eternall Life*, ſo he had that *Life in himſelf*, which in due time he would beſtow upon them.

For though He had all the paſſions of a man, yet he had all the perfections likewiſe of God: that none might be ſo profanely contumelious, as to contemn his Deity, becauſe he took upon him the groſsneſs of our Humanity. He was born of a woman; but ſhe a Virgin: that was humane, this Divine. He was wrapt in ſwaddling-cloaths when

Greg. Nazianz. orat. XXXV. p. 575.

when he was an infant; but ſhaked off the cloaths that wrapt him in the ſepulchre when he was dead. He was laid in a manger; but then glorified by Angels, pointed to by a Star, and worſhipped by the Wiſe men. He was driven into Egypt; but there drove away the errours of the Egyptians. The Jews ſaw no beauty in him; but he ſhone upon the mountain brighter then the Sun, prefiguring the glory to which he ſhould aſcend. He was baptized and tempted, as Man; but he took away the Sins of the World, and got the victory, as God. He was hungry; but fed many thouſands, and is himſelf the heavenly Bread which giveth life. He was thirſty; but gave the waters of life, and made rivers of living waters flow from thoſe that believed on him. He was called a Samaritan, and they ſaid he had a Devill; but he put Devills to flight, and tumbled whole legions of them into the deep, and made the Prince of Devills fall like lightning from heaven. He was ſold for thirty pieces of ſilver; but purchaſed the whole World with the great price of his own bloud. He was led as a ſheep to the ſlaughter; but was the Shepherd of Iſrael, and now is of all the World. He was dumb as a lamb before the ſhearers; but is the WORD preached by the voice of one crying in the wilder-

wilderneſs. He was wounded and bruiſed; but healed every ſickneſs and all manner of diſeaſe. He was lifted up on the tree, and there fixed; but reſtored us to the tree of life, and ſaved the thief who was crucified with him. He laid down his life; but had power to take it again, and the veil rent, the rocks were cleft, and the dead were raiſed. He died; but he gives life, and by death extinguiſhed death. He was buried; but roſe again out of the grave. He went down into hell; but he brought up Souls with him, and aſcended into heaven, and will come again, to judge the quick and the dead, and to examine all ſuch diſcourſes as detract from his glory.

O my Soul, for ever praiſe him, and let thy heart rejoyce in his holy Name. Love him as thy Life; confide in his word; depend on his power; and expect from him the bleſſing of *Eternall Life*. For he is the *AMEN*, *the faithfull and true witneſs*, who cannot lie; *the beginning of the Creation of God*, whom all Creatures without a voice confeſs to be their Lord. *The Heavens cry, that it was God who bowed them, and came down to be a man for our ſakes. The Sun cries, It was my Lord who was crucified in the fleſh; at the*

Proclus Orat. xiii. εἰς τὸν Παῤῥ.

the light of whoſe Divinity I was afraid, and withdrew my beams. The Earth cries, It was He that formed me, who ſuffered; which made me quake and tremble at the horrid fact. The Sea cries, He was not my fellow-ſervant who walkt, with one of his Diſciples, upon my back. The Temple cries, He that was worſhipped here is now blaſphemed; and therefore I rend my garments. Nay, Hell cries, He was not a mere man who deſcended hither; for whom I received as a Captive, I found to be the Omnipotent God. And if we ask the heavenly powers, and deſire the Angels and Archangels and the whole hoſt of heaven to tell us, Who was he that appeared on earth, and was crucified in the fleſh? they will all anſwer aloud, in the words of the Prophet David; The Lord, the God of hoſts, he is the King of Glory. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAP,

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the Teſtimony of the HOLY GHOST, *the* Third *Witneſs in Heaven.*

NOW I proceed to examine the Teſtimony which the Third Witneſs in Heaven gave concerning this future ſtate; which is the HOLY GHOST, the Third Perſon in the Bleſſed Trinity. Who openly aſſures us, by as many ways and by the ſame means, that we *have eternall Life in Chriſt Jeſus*, as he did that *Jeſus* is the *Son of God*. And, that I may not be tedious in a buſineſs wherein we have already received ſuch ſatisfaction, let us take but a ſmall taſte of thoſe *three* Teſtimonies of the Holy Ghoſt, which I alledged in the former Treatiſe.

I.

And *firſt*, you know that there was a viſible appearance of the HOLY GHOST at our Saviour's Baptiſm: when the Divine

vine Glory came down from heaven, and reſted on him in the ſight of *John* the Baptiſt; whereby he was perſuaded that this was the *Meſſiah*, the King of *Iſrael*. And if we carefully enquire into it, we ſhall find it to have been as clear a Witneſs, that it is in his power and in his purpoſe to give *Eternall Life* to all his faithfull ſubjects.

I. For *firſt*, the very end of its appearing was to inveſt him with the higheſt office and dignity; which from this time he took upon him and exerciſed, whereas before he had lived as a private perſon. So you reade x. *Act.* 38. that he was *anointed with the Holy Ghoſt and with power.* Which being a ceremony whereby Kings are created, we are to underſtand that by the coming down of the HOLY GHOST he was appointed our Lord and Sovereign: one part of whoſe office is, to beſtow rewards on thoſe that doe him good and faithfull ſervice. Now *his Kingdom not being of this World*, as he profeſſed, and as was apparent by his life and death; and yet he conſtantly aſſerting that he was a King, and exerciſing ſeverall acts of Royall Authority, as I have formerly proved; we muſt conclude, that by this

Unction

Unction he was deſigned to be a King in the heavens: where he diſpoſes of all places and preferments, and will promote all his loyall ſubjects to the greateſt honours and dignities.

There is no reaſon to doubt of it, for the *Glory of the Lord* which at his Baptiſm deſcended on him, ſo as it had never done on any man, was the *Seal*, or, if you will, the *Crown* of God upon him; which markt him to be the Lord of Glory, from whom we may expect the bleſſing of Eternall Life. The very opening alſo of the Heavens, at the deſcent of the HOLY GHOST upon him, ſignified as much, (as St. *Chryſoſtom* thinks,) and was a plain declaration of the exceeding great favour of God towards us. Who now *open'd to us*, as he ſpeaks *, τὰς πύλας τὰς ἄνω, *thoſe gates above; and ſent the Spirit from thence to call us to our celeſtiall Country: and not ſimply to call us, but with the greateſt prerogative: for he hath not made us Angels and Archangels, but making us the Sons of God and his beloved Sons, ſo he draws us to that heavenly portion.*

* Homil. xii. in Matthæum.

II. Which

II. Which we may with the greater confidence expect, becauſe the HOLY GHOST, as I obſerved heretofore, not onely came down upon him; but *reſted*, or took up its abode in him. It did not onely overſhadow him, as the Glory of the Lord did the bleſſed Virgin; but deſcending on him ſettled it ſelf in him as its habitation: inſomuch that every day one might ſee the Glory of the Lord ſhining in him. Thus *John Baptiſt*, who was a carefull obſerver of it, relates in i. *Joh.* 32, 33. where he twice takes notice of the *abiding* and the *reſting* of the HOLY GHOST with him. In which *Iſaac Abarbinel* himſelf, a known enemy to *Jeſus*, confeſſes the excellency of *Chriſt*'s prophecy conſiſts; This being one of the *Ten* privileges which the *Meſſiah*, he ſaith, ſhall be indued withall, that *the Spirit of the Lord ſhall reſt upon him.* xi. *Iſa.* 2. So it did upon our Saviour, (as an undoubted Prophet teſtified,) in whom all the *fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt bodily*: and therefore He muſt needs *have Life in himſelf*; and out of his fulneſs, as St. *John* ſpeaks, we may expect to *receive grace for grace.*

in xi. *Iſa.*

For

For he that bad *John* baptize, you may farther conſider, told him, that this perſon who had the HOLY GHOST not onely *deſcending* on him, but *reſiding* in him, was He that ſhould baptize men with the Holy Ghoſt. Be a King, that is, in the heavens, and have all power committed to him; as he would demonſtrate by ſending the Holy Ghoſt upon others, as now it came upon him. And till that time came, it was as viſible as the Light wherein the HOLY GHOST appeared, that it did inhabit in him, by the conſtant ſenſible effects of his Divine power every-where. St. *Luke*, as I obſerved in the Firſt Part, remembers how he returned immediately from *Jordan*, where he was baptized, *full of the Holy Ghoſt.* iv. *Luk.* 1. As was manifeſt, not onely from a number of miraculous operations, but from the no-leſs wonderfull wiſedom whereby he ſpake, and opened the ancient Oracles of God. For to this end alſo he was anointed, (and herein he exerciſed the authority of a King,) as the very firſt place of the Propheticall Books which he expounded clearly tells us. iv. *Luk.* 18, 19. Where you may note, that the great buſineſs for which he was

anointed by the Spirit was, *to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* The time of grace, that is, wherein the good will and pleaſure of God was ſhewn to the world; which conſiſts principally in giving remiſſion of ſins, and eternall Life. This he came to proclaim and publiſh with the power of the HOLY GHOST; having all thoſe divine gifts, mentioned in xi. *Iſaiah*, to qualify him for this high office: *four* of which belong to the Mind, (and was well repreſented by that luminous body which came down upon him at his Baptiſm,) and *one* to the Will, and *another* to the power of action; viz. *Wiſedome*, *Underſtanding*, *Counſel*, *Might*, *Knowledge*, and *the Fear of the Lord.* He was able on all occaſions to ſpeak moſt divinely, to teach as one that had authority, to evade all the ſecret plots which his adverſaries had upon him, to ſearch into their very hearts and deſires, to ſhew the ſtraight way to that bliſs which he preached, to foil all the power of the Enemy, and to raiſe even the dead to life again. Which were evident demonſtrations that the *Spirit of the Lord reſted on him*, and made him the greateſt Prophet that ever was; not onely the Preacher, but the Giver of ETERNALL LIFE.

III.

III. For as by this power of the Holy Ghoſt it was manifeſt he *had Life in himſelf*; ſo God's intention to give this Life to us was apparent from the manner of its deſcent; which is ſaid to have been *like a Dove*. The phraſe, indeed, is dubious, and may ſignify onely, that this glorious Body which came down from heaven was, in its deſcent or falling, like the coming down of a Dove with its wings ſpred abroad. Yet ſince St. *Luke* ſaith that it came *in a bodily ſhape*; and the Church, though the words do not neceſſarily inforce it, hath thus underſtood it; we may moſt probably conclude, the word *Like* hath relation not onely to the *coming down*, but to the *Dove* it ſelf: telling us, that the form or figure of this celeſtiall glory which now appeared, carried the reſemblance of that creature.

Now to think that this form was aſſumed without any deſign at all, would be very contrary to common reaſon: which leads us rather to conceive, that God would ſhew, at the very firſt entrance of our Saviour upon his office, by this known emblem of meekneſs and love, what great favour and kindneſs he intended to ſhew

to mankind; and with what a tender ſpirit of gentleneſs and ſweetneſs our Lord ſhould exerciſe the Miniſtry committed to him, towards the *poor*, and the *broken in heart*, and the miſerable *captives*, to whom he preached the *acceptable year of the Lord*. Or elſe, as St. *Chryſoſtome's* words are, *He remembers us hereby of the old hiſtory*. For the whole World being once ſhipwreck'd, and humane kind being in great danger to be totally loſt, this Creature appeared with an Olive-branch in her mouth, and brought them glad tidings that the tempeſt was over, and that there was now an univerſal calm. Ἅπερ πάντα τῶν μελλόντων τύπος ἦν, *All which things were a type and figure of what was to come. For now when the affairs of mankind were in a worſe condition, and they were all in danger of a ſoarer puniſhment, the unſpeakable grace of God in our Saviour ſteps in for our reſcue. And therefore a Dove appeared again, not bringing an Olive-branch, but ſhewing us our Deliverer from all evill, and adminiſtring unto us good hopes. For it doth not bring merely one man and his family out of danger, but appeared to lead all the world to heaven; and, in ſtead of an Olive-branch, brought the adoption of Sons to all mankind. And*

where

where the dignity of this adoption is, there is the deſtruction of all evill things, and the gift of all things that are good. To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks *Theophylact*, who contracts his ſenſe in fewer words. "As "the *Dove* brought to *Noah* the news "that the waters of the floud were gone; "ſo now the HOLY GHOST brought "the joyfull news of the doing away of "Sin. *There* was an Olive-branch; and "*here* was the mercy of God.

And thus *John Baptiſt* underſtood it, who having ſeen this ſight cried out, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world*; that is, *Death* the puniſhment of Sin; and conſequently reſtores us to immortall life. i. *Joh.* 29, 30, *&c.* This, he thought, declared God to be reconciled; and lookt upon it as a token that the heavens had laid aſide their diſpleaſure, and would be at peace with the ſinfull ſons of men. The windows, you know, of heaven were opened in the old World; but dark and pitchy clouds were all that appeared, which poured down nothing but a floud of rain upon mankind. Whereas now, quite contrary, when the heavens were opened again, there was no diſmall ſight preſented it

ſelf, but onely a pure light and glorious brightneſs ſhone from the face of God. And the HOLY GHOST in the form of a *Dove* appeared, not like that of *Noah* after the deluge had ſwept all mankind (very few excepted) from the face of the earth; but, to give notice to the World, that God would not take ſuch vengeance upon men for their wickedneſs, but be graciouſly reconciled to them, by ſaving them from death, and giving them the bleſſing of Eternall Life. One might well gather as much from this ſight; eſpecially when there was ſuch an *Olive-branch* of peace (if I may ſo call it) in the mouth of this Dove, as that voice from heaven which came along with it, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* One of theſe illuſtrates and explains the other: and both of them tell us, that the heavens now look upon us with a ſerene countenance; and that we are no longer ſhut out of them, but God is ſo well ſatisfied, that he will admit us into thoſe celeſtiall habitations.

II.

This was farther declared afterward, when the Apoſtles, according to his promiſe,

promiſe, were on the day of Pentecoſt *baptized with the Holy Ghoſt:* whereby they were ſent by him, as he was by the Father. Then the Heavens poured down ſuch a large ſhowr of the Divine grace, as preſently overflowed the World with a comfortable ſenſe of ETERNALL LIFE. This was one great end of the coming of the HOLY GHOST, which then *witneſſed* to our Saviour, and openly ſhew'd him to the World as the *Prince of life.* iii. *Act.* 15.

For, (1.) it was a plain demonſtration that He whom the *Jews* had murthered was alive from the dead; and had not loſt his power, which was ſo eminent in him all the while he was on earth, to doe good, and beſtow benefits upon mankind. And (2.) the greatneſs of the benefit ſhews that he was greater in power then ever, having ennobled all his Servants, and raiſed men of the loweſt condition to the higheſt dignities, by beſtowing on them the gift of the HOLY GHOST. It was *his* gift, as he fore-told in his life-time, when he ſaid, *I will ſend the Comforter from the Father*; xv. *Joh.* 26. and, *He ſhall receive of mine, and ſhew it unto you:* xvi. *Joh.* 14, 15. And there-

fore the *Holy Ghoſt* declared *his* greatneſs and power over all; as St. *Peter* diſcourſes in the very firſt Sermon he preached after our Saviour's reſurrection on the day of Pentecoſt. ii. *Act.* 33. Where he tells the *Jews*, that what they ſaw and heard, and were amazed at, was ſhed forth and poured on them by *Jeſus*, who had now received the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt. And *therefore*, ſays he, ver. 36. *let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that Jeſus whom ye crucified both Lord and Chriſt.* Which is as much as to ſay, You ought to look upon this as an undoubted argument that he is Lord of all things, (the *Chriſt* or King whom God the Father hath appointed,) becauſe he hath ſent ſuch royall gifts to his ſervants as none but the Lord of the world could poſſibly beſtow.

And by the way we may take notice, that the better ſort of the *Jews* themſelves expect the *Meſſiah* ſhould bring ſuch grace to men. For *Abarbinel*, in the place fore-mentioned, acknowledging Miraculous works to be a note whereby the *Meſſiah* ſhall be known, reckons this for one of them, *the effuſion of the Spirit of God* ſpoken of by the Prophet *Joel.* Our Lord

Lord therefore ſending this down in a plentifull manner on the day of Pentecoſt, thereby manifeſted, if they would have ſeen it, that he had the mark of their King upon him; and indeed could doe that which they all confeſs is the Work of God alone, who onely can pour out the gifts which the Prophet there promiſes. There is no reaſon to queſtion the power of ſuch a King as this, to doe what he pleaſes; even to prefer his ſubjects to his heavenly Kingdom. They may be raiſed, when he thinks good, to reign with him above; as now they began to doe upon the earth. It depends upon his will alone to exalt them to that very place, from whence this mighty power of the Holy Ghoſt came down upon them.

But that we may be ſatisfied the HOLY GHOST was an expreſs Witneſs of his being the *Prince of life*, (a King that hath Life in himſelf,) *a Prince and a Saviour*, (as it is v. *Act.* 31.) who can deliver men from the oppreſſion of all their Enemies, the greateſt of which is Death, you may conſider, (3.) that the miraculous change which was wrought on a ſudden in the minds of very ignorant men,

is

is an evident argument what he can doe for our Souls in the other World. He inſpired them with ſuch Underſtanding by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, that the greateſt Doctours in *Iſrael* were not able to reſiſt the Wiſedom whereby they ſpake. They underſtood clearly all the ancient Prophecies: There was no veil or cloud any longer upon them, but the *Holy Ghoſt* made them ſee the whole Myſtery which was wrapt up in them. It revealed all Types; explained all Figures; led them into the Sanctuary and Moſt holy place; ſhew'd them the true meaning of the Mercy-ſeat; and laid all thoſe things, which did but obſcurely point at ETERNALL LIFE, ſo open and naked, that none could chuſe but ſee, if he did not ſhut his eyes, they were not the ſame men that they had been but juſt before, and were made thus learned without any humane helps of inſtruction. A convincing argument of his power to raiſe our Minds when we depart this World, and have not the clouds of this Body before our eyes, to as great a pitch of knowledge as I diſcourſed of in the beginning of this Treatiſe. And the ſuddenneſs of this change was as clear an argument that he can doe it without difficulty;

culty; and that there is not ſo great a diſtance between this preſent ſtate and that which we expect, but he can preſently tranſlate us to it.

And (4.) this Knowledge, you may conſider farther, being accompanied with a mighty Power, whereby the Holy Ghoſt inabled them not onely to give eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, health to the ſick, but life alſo to the dead, (as was very well known in thoſe days) was an undoubted teſtimony, that He from whom it came is able alſo to *change theſe vile bodies, and make them like to his own moſt glorious body.* For it is viſible he hath a power, whereby he can *ſubdue all things to himſelf.* To take away life, you may think is no ſuch great matter, that we ſhould take any notice of it: yet to doe even this with a word for lying to the HOLY GHOST, was an argument of a mighty power reſiding in the Apoſtles. And when *Abarbinell* ſpeaks of the power of the *Meſſiah* to work Miracles, from that Prophecy of *Iſaiah* xi. he alledges theſe words to prove it; (verſ. 4.) *He ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips ſhall he ſlay the wicked.* Which was never literally

literally fulfilled during our Saviour's ſtay on Earth; (where he did nothing but good to men;) but was made good after he went to Heaven by his power in his Miniſters, who ſmote that wicked couple mentioned *Act.* v. without any hands, merely with the breath of their mouth. What ſhall we think then of their reſtoring men to life after they were dead; for which they were more notorious? We cannot but look on this as a great witneſs of the wonderfull power of *Jeſus* in them; and conſequently of the life and glory he intended to beſtow on ſinfull duſt and aſhes. He would not have filled them thus full of his Spirit, if he had not meant thereby to raiſe their expectations above all that even by its power they at preſent felt. Had it not been his deſign to make them hereafter like to God, he would not have preferred them to ſuch a reſemblance of his Wiſedom and Power here in this World. They that could raiſe others from the dead, had no reaſon to doubt of being raiſed up themſelves. When they ſaw themſelves made the conveyers of ſuch great bleſſings to all mankind; they muſt needs ſtand fair, they could not but conclude, for a very large portion of his favour to their own perſons.

For

For the truth is, (5.) theſe gifts which were then given to men proclaimed aloud the marvellous bounty of our Saviour, as well as his power: and would not let them doubt of a far more glorious exerciſe of it in the other World, then they ſaw, and were the inſtruments of, in this. And if any imagine that, though this might be a teſtimony to *them* of Eternall Life, yet it is none to *us*; the contrary will ſoon be evident, if you do but conſider, (6.) that our Lord having made a promiſe of *Eternall Life*, not onely to his Apoſtles, but to all that believe on his Name; the HOLY GHOST puts us in ſtrong hope of it, by demonſtrating his faithfulneſs to his word. For the Effuſion of it was the performance of a promiſe which he had frequently made when he was with them; both before his death, (xiv. *Joh.* 16. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter,*) and after his Reſurrection, xxiv. *Luk.* 49. *Behold, I ſend the promiſe of my Father upon you,* &c. i. Act. 4, 5. *Being aſſembled together with them, he commanded them not to depart from Jeruſalem, but wait for the promiſe of the Father, which, ſaid he, you have heard of me: For you ſhall be baptized with*

with the Holy Ghoſt, not many days hence. And therefore we have great reaſon to look for the promiſe of Eternall Life with much confidence, becauſe He who made it was ſo faithfull and juſt in fulfilling his former promiſe, at the time appointed. Eſpecially ſince he thereby demonſtrated, that he hath ſufficient power to doe for us according to his word. For he who made ſuch an extraordinary change in them on the day of *Pentecoſt*, that they were able in an inſtant to ſpeak all languages, to propheſy, and underſtand the ſecret counſels of God, can change us, we need not queſtion, from glory to glory; and at laſt transform us ſo perfectly, as to make us like to himſelf.

And I may adde, to ſtrengthen this conſideration, (7.) that our Lord declared he would ſend the HOLY GHOST for this very purpoſe, that they might believe the reſt of his holy promiſes; particularly this great one, of *Eternall Life.* Which is the meaning of that which you reade in xiv. *Joh.* 12. where after he had told them (ver. 9, 10, 11.) that God appeared to them and ſhew'd himſelf in the Works that He did, which demonſtrated that *the Father dwelt in him*, and conſequently

quently that he would *go and prepare a place for them, and take them up to himſelf,* he adds theſe remarkable words; *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, He that believeth in me, the works that I doe ſhall he doe alſo; and greater works then theſe ſhall he doe, becauſe I go unto my Father.* As if he had ſaid, " Mark now what I farther de-
" clare to you, and rely upon it as a cer-
" tain truth. The works that I have
" done are ſufficient to convince you:
" but for a greater confirmation of your
" faith, that *I am going to the Father,* and
" am *the Way, the Truth, and the Life,* I
" tell you, that after I am departed theſe
" wonderfull things ſhall be repeated, be-
" fore the eyes of the world, by thoſe
" that believe on me. Nay, ſome things
" ſhall be done which your eyes have
" not yet ſeen; *becauſe I go to my Father,*
" *i. e.* have power in the Heavens, and
" have reſerved ſomething peculiar to be
" given as a teſtimony of it, over and a-
" bove what I have done my ſelf. And that was their ſpeaking with all tongues on a ſudden, and their propheſying; whereby they were inabled to preach to all Nations, as he had done to the *Jews* alone, and work the ſame wonders among the heathen, which he had wrought onely in

that

that Country. A marvellous evidence this was of the power and glory of *Christ* to give *eternall life*; in that being absent he did those things by his Apostles, which were not performed whilst he was present with them.

And therefore (8.) upon this account the HOLY GHOST thus given to the Apostles, and those that believed by their word, is called *the earnest of the inheritance in their hearts, untill the redemption of the purchased possession.* 2 *Cor.* i. 22. i. *Eph.* 14. It was something given them in hand, before his second appearing for full redemption, to assure them they should as certainly receive all that was behind, as they had already received this pawn and pledge of his mighty love.

And indeed we have all much reason to think that he will doe very great things for us when he appears in his own person, (as the Holy Ghost assures us he will, iii. *Act.* 19, 20.) since he hath done so much good to the world by the Apostles, his Deputies, who were men like to our selves. If his Servants brought such blessings to men, then what will the Lord himself bring with him at his coming?

If

If his Miniſters reſtored dead men to life again; the Maſter ſure will beſtow a life as much excelling that which they reſtored, as he excells his Officers. In ſhort, if the people lookt ſo earneſtly on two poor Fiſher-men, when they had cured a man lame from his mother's womb; iii. *Act.* 12. much more will the Lord of glory draw the eyes of the world to him, by doing aſtoniſhing things for his people; *when he ſhall come* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks 2 *Theſſ.* i. 10.) *to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.* "He will give ſuch a glory to us, as will "be much for his own credit, and reflect "glory on himſelf. He will not ſo much "conſult what is fit for us to receive, as "what is fit for ſuch a Prince as he to "give. He will cloath us with ſuch ho-"nour and glory, that it will be an ho-"nour to him to have his followers ap-"pear in ſuch rich and ſhining liveries. "It will ſet men into admiration to be-"hold the bounty of his royall favour to "them; and much advance the greatneſs "of this Prince, to ſee ſuch ſubjects at-"tend him, the meaneſt of which are "Kings. Nor do we ſtrain our fancies, and exalt our hopes above what we can reaſonably expect, when we look for ſuch

high dignities: for that we ſhall be admitted into his heavenly Court, and be thus ſumptuouſly apparell'd, and magnificently entertained by Angels to wait upon us, and carry us to him, we are aſſured by the teſtimony of the HOLY GHOST: which cloathed poor men here with a power greater then the moſt abſolute Monarch on earth ever enjoyed; and enabled them to deal greater and richer gifts to men, yea, to ſcatter them abroad every day as they paſt along the ſtreets, or did but ſpred their ſhadow over them, then Kings and Emperours could doe at their Coronation, or Conquerours at their moſt magnificent Triumphs.

III.

And as a farther proof of this, we muſt obſerve once more, that the HOLY GHOST gave its teſtimony of the *Life* that is in *Jeſus*, and ſhall be given to us, when it fell down upon the common ſort of believers, as it had done upon the Apoſtles: who were not deſirous to keep the miraculous gifts of it to themſelves alone, but readily communicated them to others. It was a great wonder

to

to hear the Apoſtles ſpeak with tongues and propheſy, to ſee them cure the lame, and reſtore the blind to their ſight, nay, raiſe the dead to life, onely by bidding them live and be well in the Name of *Jeſus*: (things which no Potentates on Earth, as I ſaid before, could beſtow, though they were forward to take to themſelves the name of Gods, and affected Divine hónours:) But it was a greater wonder, to ſee other illiterate Chriſtians receive the ſame gifts by the laying on of their hands, and invocation of the Name of the Lord *Jeſus*; who preſently filled them with the HOLY GHOST.

This was a thing ſo ſtrange, that they could not but look upon it as a token of the moſt extraordinary Love of God to mankind; from whence they might expect as much happineſs as the word ETERNALL LIFE, I told you, imports. For, (1.) nothing ever diſcovered the capacity of humane Souls ſo much as this effuſion of the HOLY GHOST: which ſhew'd how large and wide they are, and how much they can contain, and to what degree of excellence they may be improved and raiſed, and that on a ſudden, by the power of God. This

gave them a ſtrong taſt of what was to come; and both made them reliſh immortall life above all other things, and alſo put them in hope to attain it, by the favour of that perſon who had promoted them to ſuch a ſight of it, in this vaſt meaſure of wiſedom and love wherewith they were indued. For, (2.) it could argue nothing leſs, they might very well think, then that they who wore ſuch eminent marks of his favour, as to have a Crown of life and glory ſet upon their heads in *this* world, ſhould be raiſed to far greater honours in the *next*, when they ſhould be more capable of his kindneſs, and nearer to himſelf. And indeed, (3.) ſince hereby he dwelt in them, and they became the *Temples of the Holy Ghoſt*, they might be confident he would not ſuffer ſo holy a place to be pulled down, but in order to the building of it better. And ſince the Holy Ghoſt alſo (4.) wonderfully inlarged their hearts, and made them exceeding deſirous as well as inſtrumentall in conveying ſuch exceeding great benefits to others; they could not but look upon it as an undeniable argument of the moſt bounteous goodneſs of God; who is far more inclinable to doe good then Men can be, and more ready to reward

ward our ſervices then we can be to doe our work.

And conſidering moreover (5.) the promiſe he had made of ETERNALL LIFE, the gift of the Holy Ghoſt was a marvellous earneſt of it, and a kind of beginning of it in their Souls. What? ſhall an ignorant Sea-man be made a Prophet, and ſpeak with all tongues? a poor Tent-maker unlock Myſteries, and indite ſpirituall Songs and Hymns? a man that yeſterday could mend nothing but his Nets, now cure a man of a bloudy-flux, or mend a lame leg? a rude Souldier command Devils, and ſtorm his ſtrong holds more eaſily then a town without walls? Lord, what light is this, might they juſtly ſay, which ſhines in our dungeon! what power is this wherewith we ſee frail fleſh armed! what might which thou haſt given to graſs and hay! As well may a butterfly think of mounting up to heaven, or a flower attempt to pluck up a cedar, as we poor wretches conceive a thought of effecting ſuch wonderfull things. This ſure ſignifies that men are very dear to God, or elſe he would not thus dwell among them. It may well make us believe there is nothing ſo great, nothing ſo glo-

rious promiſed by *Jeſus*, but he will work it for us; having already transformed us into ſuch noble creatures. As *Manoah's* wife ſaid to him, xiii. *Judg.* 23. *If the Lord were pleaſed to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have ſhewed us ſuch things as theſe:* ſo might they in this caſe ſay, and with greater advantage then ſhe, If the Lord would let us ſtill remain under the power of death, he would not have *given* ſuch gifts into our hands, (for that is more then to *receive* the poor oblations we make to him,) nor would he have revealed ſuch ſecrets to us. He would not have ſent us the ſpirit of wiſedom and knowledge, nor raiſed us to the degree of prophecy, nor put new tongues into our mouths to declare his wonderfull works, nor made all diſeaſes ſubmit to our word. All which gifts, with divers others, they had reaſon to look upon as the *earneſt of the Spirit*, and the *Seal* of the Holy Ghoſt, whereby they had an aſſurance given them (as I hope to ſhew elſewhere) of the everlaſting inheritance which *Jeſus* hath promiſed in the heavens. For they demonſtrated, that He who had power thus to alter and advance mean men, and to make them

them *Stuporem mundi* the wonder and amazement of the world, could alſo give that *Life* which he had promiſed, by that very power which they felt already working in them.

And they alſo made it evident (6.) that he would beſtow it. For there is no more reaſon that he ſhould thus beſtow the *Holy Ghoſt* at preſent, then that he ſhould hereafter give us *Eternall Life*. His faithfull promiſe is the ſecurity for both; our hopes are built upon that ſure foundation. If there be any difference between the ground there is for one more then the other, the advantage lies on the ſide of the hope of *Eternall Life*. Which there is more reaſon now that he ſhould give us, then there was for giving the *Holy Ghoſt*; even becauſe he hath already done ſo much for his Church: and there is more reaſon we ſhould expect it; becauſe, as I ſaid before, we have ſeen a remarkable inſtance of his fidelity, in pouring out ſuch *rivers of living water*, when he ſent the Spirit which he promiſed.

And here it comes to my mind, that another Wonder, which *Abarbinell* ſays *in* xi. *Iſa.*

the *Meſſiah* ſhall work at his coming, is a Miracle like that of dividing the Red ſea when *Iſrael* came out of *Egypt*. Which he endeavours to prove from xi. *Iſa.* 15. *The Lord ſhall utterly deſtroy* (or *dry up*) *the tongue of the Egyptian Sea*, &c. that is, ſays he, of *Nile*, the great River of *Egypt*. This our Lord hath done more excellently then they imagine. For it was nothing near ſo great a wonder, that *Iſrael* ſhould be *baptized into Moſes in the Sea*; as it was, that the people who followed *Jeſus* ſhould be baptized into him with the Holy Ghoſt poured down upon them from heaven. The paſſing through the *Sea*, and the *Cloud* to boot, was not ſuch a certain argument, that *Moſes* would bring them out of the great affliction wherein they had been plung'd, and lead them to *Canaan*, their reſt and inheritance; as theſe *rivers of living water*, the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, and the admirable effects thereof, filling the world with the *Glory of the Lord*, were an undeniable proof to thoſe who were under its conduct, that *Jeſus* was the perſon who would lead them to a better reſt, in a more heavenly Country, which flows with far ſweeter delights then milk and hony. This did, as it were, dip their ſouls into

this

this belief, and made them ſenſible that *Jeſus is the Authour of Eternall Salvation*; far more then the Sea it ſelf could baptize their forefathers into *Moſes*, *i. e.* perſuade them that he was the Prophet of God who would deliver them, and bring them to the peaceable enjoyments they deſired.

And therefore, I obſerve, after the *Jews*, who quarrelled at St. *Peter*'s preaching to the Gentiles, were ſatisfied that the *Holy Ghoſt* was faln upon them, even as upon themſelves, they had no more to ſay but this, *then hath God alſo to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* xi. *Act.* 18. This they lookt upon as the beginning of God's favour and loving-kindneſs to them, which would conclude in nothing leſs then the ETERNALL LIFE of which we are diſcourſing. And ſo this very Apoſtle St. *John*, after he had put the Diſciples in mind of the UNCTION they had received, and exhorted them to continue in that *Doctrine* which it taught, (Chap. ii. of this Epiſtle, 20, 24.) immediately adds that *this is the promiſe which he hath promiſed us, even Eternall Life*, ver. 25. Which was as much as to ſay, that the *Unction* by the HOLY GHOST had ſo perfectly inſtructed

inſtructed them in the certainty of this great happineſs, that it was ſufficient to move them to abide in the Doctrine of *Jeſus*: none being able to teach them better, or to put them in hope of any thing greater then this ETERNALL LIFE which he promiſed, and by the HOLY GHOST aſſured.

It is true indeed, which ſome are forward to object, that we in theſe days ſee not ſuch evidences as thoſe Believers had; the *Holy Ghoſt* not inhabiting thus in every one of our Souls as it did in theirs. Nor is there the like reaſon it ſhould; we being ingaged in no ſuch hard ſervices as theirs, which ſtood in need to be incouraged with the ſtrongeſt hopes of a glorious reward. They were *in deaths often*, (as St. *Paul* ſpeaks,) and therefore were in danger to faint, without a moſt lively guſt of immortall Life. The whole World was their enemy, and with the greateſt rage oppos'd their preaching; which required a clearer ſight of the World to come, and a more ſenſible deſcent of inviſible powers for their aſſiſtence and ſupport. From whence we alſo derive no ſmall benefit: becauſe the more ſenſible demonſtration they had of it,

it, the firmer grounds of hope are laid for us; whoſe faith relies upon their teſtimony, and the power of the HOLY GHOST in them. This is ſufficient to hearten us in our duty, that our Lord hath given to thoſe, whoſe teſtimony we have the greateſt reaſon to believe, ſuch viſible and palpable evidences of his being alive, and of his intentions to quicken his ſervants to Life everlaſting with himſelf. Let us but heartily apply our ſelves, upon theſe grounds, *to live by the faith of the Son of God*; and we ſhall find the ſame Spirit that wrought in them operating in us alſo, to confirm our Faith and Hope, and make us *rejoyce in hope of the glory of God.*

And ſo much may ſuffice to have been ſaid of the *Witneſs* of the HOLY GHOST, which perfectly agrees with the other two of the FATHER and of the SON: *who are all one*, you ſee ſtill, *in their Teſtimony, as well as in their Nature.* So I expreſs'd my ſelf in the Concluſion of my former Diſcourſe about theſe *Three Witneſſes* *; ſuppoſing theſe words, though few, would have ſufficiently teſtified my right belief in the Holy Trinity;

* Chap. iv. pag. 235.

Trinity; and that none would have imagined, I waved the farther explication of that paſſage, THESE THREE ARE ONE, becauſe I entertained a ſenſe of it differing from that of the Catholick Church. I was not conſcious to my ſelf of any ſuch Hereſy; and therefore had no reaſon to be ſolicitous to prevent this accuſation, by diverting from the ſubject I had in hand, unto another Argument. But ſome, I have heard, have been ſo unkind, (to ſay no more) let them examine their hearts from what grounds, as to whiſper ſuch ſuſpicions. And therefore I judge it neceſſary to take occaſion here to declare, that I believe *theſe three to be one*, in the ſame ſenſe that all Catholick Writers have done, who have treated of the ever-bleſſed Trinity. And St. *Auguſtine* aſſures me*, that every one who meddled with this argument before him, intended to teach this according to the Scriptures, That *the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt enjoy the divine Unity of one and the ſame Subſtance, in an inſeparable Equality. Hæc mea fides eſt, quia hæc eſt Catholica fides*; (as he concludes that Chapter) *This is my Faith, becauſe it is the Catholick Faith.* "We have but one "God, becauſe there is but one God-head;

* *L.* 1. *de Trin. c.* 4.

"head; and they that are of him have re-
"lation to One, though we believe them
"to be Three. For this is not more God
"and that leſs, nor is this before and that
"behind, nor are they ſeparated in will
"or divided in power, nor are any of thoſe
"things to be found there which belong
"to divided Beings; but, to ſpeak all in
"a few words, *there is One undivided*
"*Godhead in ſeverall Perſons, as in three*
"*Suns cohering together there is one com-*
"*mixture of Light.* They are the words
of St. *Greg. Nazianzen*, (whom theſe Whi-
ſperers ſure, if they have read him, take
for a Catholick Writer,) in his Diſcourſe
concerning the HOLY GHOST. To
which I will adde what St. *Aug.* again
writes in his Book of Faith to *Petrus Di-*
aconus, Chap. i. *If there ſhould be one*
Perſon of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt,
as there is one Subſtance, there would be no-
thing that could be truly called a Trinity.
And again, if as the Father, Son and Ho-
ly Ghoſt are diſtinct from each other in the
propriety of Perſon, they were alſo ſevered
by diverſity of Nature, there would indeed
be a true Trinity, but this Trinity would
not be One God. But becauſe it is the Tri-
nity in one true God, it is true not onely
that there is one God, but alſo that there
is

Orat. xxxvii. p. 601.

is a Trinity; therefore that true God is in Perſons Three, but in one Nature One.

Catechef. xi. Thus our Bleſſed Saviour, St. *Cyrill* of *Hieruſalem* obſerves, doth not ſay, *I am the Father*, but, *I am in the Father*. And again, he doth not ſay, I and the Father ἓν εἰμι *am one*, but, ἓν ἐσμεν *are one*: That we may neither exclude the Son from the Godhead, nor confound him with the Father. *One, as to the dignity of the Divinity; becauſe God begat God. One, as to their Kingdom: for the Father doth not rule over ſome, and the Son over others; (as Abſalom who oppoſed his Father;) but over whom the Father reigns, over thoſe reigns the Son. One, becauſe there is no difference, nor any diſtance between them: for the Father doth not will one thing, and the Son another. One, becauſe the Son doth not make one thing, and the Father another; but there is one Workmanſhip of all, the Father making all things by the Son.* I ſuppoſe this excellent Man will paſs for orthodox among our Cenſurers, though he mention many other regards wherein the *Father* and the *Son* (I may adde the *Holy Ghoſt*) *are one*, beſides that of their Divinity. And therefore I may juſtly wonder why any ſhould find fault with me

me (if they be ſo well skill'd in Chriſtian Writers, as, no doubt, they would be thought,) for ſaying, *theſe three are one in their Teſtimony, as well as in their Nature.* I took it for a Catholick Expoſition; elſe I would have rejected it. And if this was its onely fault, that it was too ſhort; I hope they will reſt ſatisfied now that I have made it longer. Unleſs they be in the number of thoſe, whom a late Pamphlet ſpeaks of, who judge their Brethren as if they had a faculty to ſee into their hearts; and reſolve not to be ſatisfied with any words they can ſpeak, though in all appearance they have no other deſign in the world, but onely, according to the beſt of their underſtanding, ſincerely to ſerve God and his Church.

As for thoſe who would have a farther ſearch made into this Myſtery, I leave it to themſelves, if they pleaſe thus to imploy their time, after they have conſidered what the moſt Catholick Writers have thought of ſuch inquiries. *We ought to acknowledge*, ſaith St. *Gregory Nazianzen**, *One God the Father of himſelf and unbegotten, and One Son begotten of the Father, and One Spirit having its Subſtance of God:*

* *Orat.* xxvi. p. 445.

of

of the ſame nature, the ſame dignity, the ſame glory, and the ſame honour; in all things the ſame, but onely that he is not unbegotten as the Father, nor begotten as the Son. Theſe things are to be known, theſe things are to be confeſſed, within theſe things we muſt fix; leaving that long babbling, and profane novelty of words, to thoſe who have nothing elſe to doe. And the forenamed St. *Cyrill* paſſes the ſame ſentence on thoſe who curiouſly pried into this Secret in his days. "He that begot, ſays he, "onely knows him that is begotten: and "he that was begotten of him, knows "him that begat him. Believe then that "God hath a Son; but *how*, do not en- "quire; for if thou doſt, thou ſhalt not "find. Tell me firſt who he is that be- "gat, and then I will tell thee who the "begotten is. But if thou canſt not know "the nature of him that begat, do not "curiouſly ask after the manner of the "Son's being begotten. *It is ſufficient to* "*piety, to know that God hath onely one* "*Son, one naturally begotten, who did not* "*begin to be when he was born in Bethle-* "*hem, but was before all worlds.* The "Holy Ghoſt hath in the Scripture revea- "led no more; he hath not told us any "thing of the generation of the Son, out

"of

" of the Father. Τί τοίνυν πολυπραγμο-
" νεῖς; Why then doſt thou pragmatical-
" ly inquire after thoſe things which the
" Holy Ghoſt it ſelf hath not mentioned
" in the Scripture? Thou who knoweſt
" not all that is written, why doſt thou
" buſy thy ſelf curiouſly about thoſe things
" which are not written? Let it ſuffice
" thee to know, that God hath but one
" onely-begotten Son. Be not aſhamed
" to be ignorant of the reſt; for thou
" art ignorant of it together with the
" Angels.

Which is the ſame with what a more modern Writer hath ſaid,

Neſcire velle, quæ Magiſter Maximus
Docere non vult, erudita eſt inſcitia.

To be willing not to know what our Supreme Maſter will not teach, is a learned Ignorance. With which I ſhall content my ſelf; and not envy to thoſe, who have a liſt to handle theſe things more nicely, their ignorant Learning. They may venture as far as they pleaſe, if they think it ſafe; but ought not to be angry with thoſe who had rather expect farther diſcoveries in the other world: where we ſhall be more knowing by a *purer and more perfect illumination of the moſt high*

Orat. xi. πρὸς ἀνω-μάτους Τετάρτῳ Ψαλμῷ, &c.

Trinity; (as St. *Greg. Naz.* ſpeaks elſewhere;) and yet more modeſt, and apt to adore the incomprehenſible God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. Whoſe Teſtimony is ſo full to ſatisfy us there will be ſuch an happy State, that before I paſs to the other *Three Witneſſes on Earth*, I cannot but reſt a while and conſider, what a great way we are advanced towards a ſtrong and ſettled belief of *Eternall Life*, if theſe things be well digeſted in our minds.

If we would but always lay before our eyes theſe Records, and were as well acquainted with them as we are with our Evidences for our Eſtates; if they were as freſh in our minds as the words of a Record which we are to plead in ſome Court, where we have a Cauſe to be heard, or the Title to our whole Eſtate tried and determined; I do not ſee how we ſhould poſſibly doubt of this Promiſe which our Lord hath made to his followers, nor how we ſhould loſe the joy and comfort of it in this world of ſorrows. Let all thoſe who have taken the pains to reade thus far in this Treatiſe be ſo kind to themſelves, as on all occaſions to recollect what they have read, and in their quiet thoughts to

put

put themſelves often in mind, that the *Father* hath ſaid this is true, by a voice from heaven at ſeverall times: when *Jeſus* was baptized, when he was upon the holy Mount, and before a multitude of people, He teſtified that ETERNALL LIFE is in him. The *Word* alſo hath ſhewn us this glorious State, when he appeared to St. *Stephen*, to St. *Paul*, to his beloved St. *John*; who have all communicated their knowledge to us, and told us that he aſſured them He lives, and that we ſhall live by him. The *Holy Ghoſt* likewiſe hath declared this, by coming down upon Him, and upon his Apoſtles, and upon his faithfull ones. And then they cannot chuſe but rely moſt firmly upon ſuch ample and unqueſtionable Teſtimonies; and be very much affected with this *full aſſurance of Faith* which God works in us. There would be no reaſon, I am ſure, why they ſhould not as ſtrongly believe and expect the glory that *Jeſus* will give us, though they do not now ſee it; as we all do the performance of the promiſe of any perſon of known honeſty and ability, though at a great diſtance from us. No doubt the faith of Chriſtians would be immovable, did they ponder theſe things; they

would never call it into dispute, after such demonstrations, whether there be another Life or no. Yea, they themselves would become *immovable, and stedfast, and abundant in the work of our Lord*; because the very same Witnesses tell them that this is the onely way to eternall Happiness, which cannot be compassed by any means but by patient continuance in well-doing.

How well then would it be with them, could we but prevail with all Christian Souls to spend some time every day, in calling to mind what they have heard these *Heavenly Witnesses* say? If they would but cast up their eyes every morning towards heaven, and think, There *Jesus* is; there he lives in great honour and glory; there he sits at the right hand of the Throne of God; there St. *Stephen* saw him; in such glory St. *Paul* and St. *John* beheld him; from thence they heard him speak, and make most gracious promises to them; he sent the *Holy Ghost* from thence to be his Witness; there he is preparing a place for all them that have the heart to follow him; thither he will receive our Spirits to behold his glory; and with him

him ſhall all good men live for ever in unconceivable joy: How would theſe thoughts inſpire and raviſh their hearts? How would they change and transform them into quite other things? How mean and contemptible would our petty injoyments, which now ſo tempt us, ſeem in compariſon with that divine condition? How impoſſible would it be to perſwade us to yield to the breach of any of his commands, and thereby forfeit ſuch happineſs? Yea, how eaſy, ſweet and pleaſant would it be to doe as he bids us, in hope of ſuch an incomparable recompence? I leave every one to make triall of it, that he may be able to tell, if he can, what power and force there is in this ſettled belief.

It is reported by him that writes the Life of *Laurentius Juſtinianus*, that when he was a youth, about nineteen years old, which is an age you know moſt ſlippery and ſubject to danger, he thought he ſaw one day or night (I know not well whether) a very beautifull virgin approaching towards him, and thus addreſſing her ſpeech to him: "Why doſt "thou, O young man, thus diſquiet

" thine heart, and waſt thy ſtrength, in
" a vain purſuit of many things, where-
" on thou poureſt forth thy affections?
" why doſt thou ſeek for reſt in ſuch tri-
" viall injoyments? That which thou
" art ſo deſirous of, is in my power to be-
" ſtow upon thee. And if thou wilt re-
" ſolve to take me for thy Spouſe, I pro-
" miſe to bring with me ſuch a portion
" of peace and contentment, as no other
" perſon can inrich thee withall. The young man, you may well ſuppoſe, was much taken with ſo rare a feature, and ſuch fair promiſes; which moved him to crave that he might know her name, and the family from which ſhe was deſcended. To which ſhe anſwered, " *I am*
" *the Wiſedom of God*; that is my Name,
" thence is my Parentage: if thou wilt
" accept of the offer, I will be thine,
" and give all I have to thee. The youth, ſays the ſtory, inſtantly conſented; and after he had drawn a contract between them, thought ſhe took her leave of him, and went away to provide for the wedding. Upon this he awaked, and imagined the Viſion inſtructed him to betake himſelf to a Monaſticall life. Which he preſently vowed; concluding that in that retire-

retirement he was to compleat his marriage to the *Wiſedom of God*, when he had quitted the empty pleaſures of the World.

However fabulous this Story may prove, (which ſeems to have been compoſed in imitation of that Viſion of *Hercules* which many *Greek* Writers mention,) you may make it true if you pleaſe. For, behold how the true Wiſedom of God, our Bleſſed Lord and Saviour, preſents himſelf to you. He hath appeared in moſt admirable beauty and a glorious form to many of his Servants, which they have deſcribed and left us the picture of. In his Goſpell he is ſo lively expreſſed, that we cannot, if we look upon him, but behold him as *the onely-begotten of the Father*, *the brightneſs of his glory*, *and the character of his perſon*. Would it would but pleaſe you to liſten to the offers he makes you, the portion of Life and Glory hereafter, together with true peace and contentment here, which he will aſſure to you. O that you would but draw a lively image of theſe things in your mind; and repreſent the King of glory as ſoliciting your heart to his ſervice!

vice! Do you not believe that it would be infinitely more obliging, then ſuch an apparition as that now named? Would it not more eaſily make you abandon the ſinfull pleaſures of this world, then the other made him forſake the lawfull? Would not the beauty of our Saviour, and the ſplendour of his glory in the heavens ſet before your eyes, be more inamouring then any imaginary or reall beauty whatſoever? Would not theſe words of his be more piercing then any other, *I will give to him that overcomes, to inherit all things*; and, *I will be his God, and he ſhall be my Son?* Would it not tranſport our hearts with joy, to hear that he will be contracted to us; and aſſure us of ſuch a dowry with himſelf in the heavens? Would it not make all his commands ſo far from being grievous, that we ſhould think them ſweet and delicious above all the pleaſures wherein ſenſuall men are drowned? He can make no doubt of it, that hath not loſt his reaſon; and is able to underſtand what the difference is between ſuch a certain truth as this, and a dream; and between the commands of our Lord, and the

the obedience which that youth undertook to perform.

Jeſus is certainly in the heavens, He ſits at the right hand of the Majeſty on high, He unfeignedly wiſhes we would be eſpouſed to him, He will ſettle an eternall inheritance upon us: and He doth not require us to go into Monaſteries and deſerts, to live like Hermites and Anchorets, to immure our ſelves from all ſociety; (though if he did, we ſhould have no ill bargain of it;) but onely to retire ſeriouſly into our ſelves, and there often meet with him, to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly while we are in the world, to let no company draw us from his precepts, nor ſuffer any creature to rob him of our affection. And what a reaſonable demand this is, you will then ſee, when you heartily believe this ETERNALL LIFE which he hath promiſed. *Believe*, and then you will think there is nothing too much or too hard to be done or ſuffered, for the attaining ſuch a glorious Life with our Saviour. Which moved St. *Stephen* to ſuffer ſtoning, and St. *Paul* to be in deaths often,

and

and St. *John* to endure baniſhment in a moſt deſolate Iſland, and worſe things afterward, that they might be ſo happy.

And let us with honeſt hearts, deſirous to be what God would have us, beg the aſſiſtence of the HOLY GHOST to guide us in this way of underſtanding; which we ſhall find incomparably the beſt, to ſettle in our mind a ſenſe of the happineſs to come.

Macar. *Hom.* xvi. xviii. *For when the Soul comes to the perfection of the Spirit, wholly purged from all affections, and united to the Spirit, the Comforter, by an unſpeakable communion, ſo that by this heavenly mixture it becomes worthy to be a ſpirit; it is all Light, all Eye, all Spirit, all Joy, all Reſt, all Exultation, all Love, all Goodneſs and Sweetneſs. It becomes hereby privy to the Counſels of the Heavenly King, and knows his Secrets. It hath a confidence in the Almighty, and enters into his Palace, where the Angels and the ſpirits of the Saints are; though it be as yet in this world. For though it hath not attained the intire inheritance prepared for it there; yet it is ſecure from the Earneſt it hath received, as if it were*

were crowned and poſſeſſed of the Kingdome.

Who would not labour then to be ſo happy, not onely hereafter, but alſo here? there in poſſeſſion, and here in hope? What a work is it to aſcend up into heaven? What laborious ſteps can lead us to ſo great an height? What are the ſweats of this mortall life to thoſe eternall recompences? By what pains ſhall we be worthy of friendſhip with our Maker? How ſhall we make our ſelves a proper habitation for him to dwell in? For he hath ſaid, I and my Father will come and dwell in him that loves me and keeps my Commands. This is the end of the Good we have in hope: this is the heavenly Kingdom: this is the enjoyment of eternall pleaſure: this is the never-ceaſing joy; the perpetuall triumph; the retribution tranſcending all our labours, nay, all underſtanding. There are no labours, no not in thought, equall to this recompence of reward. They all fall ſo infinitely below it, that for mean, for inconſiderable pains, our tranſcendently-good Lord will give an enjoyment far ſurpaſſing all our thoughts. All humane endeavours are of no account, though we ſhould

Georg. Nicomed. in concept. S. Annæ.

ſhould wear out a whole life in them, compared with the future Bleſſedneſs. Though we ſhould ſuſtain a perpetuall combate all our days, though they ſhould be prolonged to an hundred years, or to twice as much, or thrice, or a thouſand times, and all this while we ſhould contend in a vertuous courſe; we ſhall ſeem to have done nothing, when we come to conſer it with what we ſhall receive.

And therefore let us gladly, by ſuch ſmall and poor labours, ſtrive to purchaſe theſe ſuper-ſublime recompences, and treaſure up theſe never-conſuming riches. I call thoſe poor and ſmall, which not onely ſeem ſo to all; but the perpetuall combate of an whole Age, the moſt unwearied purſuit of vertue, the moſt inceſſant and fervent pains in its ſervice. For ſuch are the Goods which our munificent Lord will give in exchange for them, ſuch are the ſuperabundant riches of his retributions, ſuch is the Hyperbole of his loving-kindneſs and goodneſs, that for few things, he will give infinite; for beggery, the greateſt riches; for periſhing things, Goods that laſt for ever.

Theſe

Theſe let us ſeek, and, dedicating our ſelves wholly to the Lord, make haſte to the obtaining ſo ineſtimable a Good. Let us conſecrate Soul and body to him, and be faſtened to his Croſs; that we may be worthy of his Eternall Kingdom, giving glory to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAP.

Chap. IX.

Concerning the Witneſſes on Earth; and firſt, *of the* WATER.

YOU have ſeen already how many there are that ſolicit our affections, and perſwade us to believe in the Lord *Jeſus*, and heartily conſent to him in whatſoever he requires. So many, that how we ſhould deny him, after He himſelf hath appeared ſo often with the promiſes of *Eternall Life*, and the *Father* alſo and the *Holy Ghoſt* have commended him to us as the Prince of Peace and the Lord of Glory, it is harder to give any reaſon, then it is to prove that he is the Son of God, and that in him is ETERNALL LIFE. For, as if theſe Witneſſes were not ſufficient, or that we may be born down by numerous Teſtimonies, there are *Three* more, who are our Neighbours, (as I may ſay) with whom we are well acquainted, and whoſe witneſs none could ever deny, that ſpeak the very ſame thing,

thing, and affirm it as strongly as the other, that *God hath given us Eternall Life*, and that *it is in his Son Jesus*.

Let us call them in too, and hear what they say, in the same order wherein we examined them before, in the former business: first taking the Testimony of the WATER, then of the BLOUD, and then of the SPIRIT.

Of the WATER.

BY *Water*, I have shewn, we are to understand, either that *Purity* whereof it is the Instrument, which was most eminent both in *Christ*'s Doctrine and Life: or else *Baptism*, both *John*'s and *his own*, by which he appeared to be the Son of God. Let us have so much patience as to hear all these once more, and consider what they say to the point in hand.

I.

And as for the *Purity* and Holiness of his *Doctrine*, there is much in it to perswade us, that he hath Life in himself, and will bestow it upon his Followers. Certain it is that, (1.) it naturally lifts up

up the Mind towards heaven, and diſpoſes thoſe that entertain it to look for *Eternall Life*; for which it is but a preparation. For it teaches us to abſtract our hearts from this Fleſh wherewith we are cloathed, and from this World wherein we live, as not worthy of all thoſe thoughts and that care which we are apt to beſtow upon them. The very intent and purpoſe of it, we cannot but ſee, is to wean our minds from earthly injoyments, and to take off our affections from the pleaſures of ſenſe; to make riches and the praiſe of men ſeem little things, and to give us contentment with our portion of preſent goods, though never ſo ſmall; in ſhort, to render us ſomething like to God himſelf, whilſt we are at this diſtance from him. What can any man make of this, but that it is a preparation for another life; an Inſtitution which deſigns to form men, and make them fit for an higher World? Do but take a review of that Compendium which I have drawn of this Doctrine, in my former Book, and you will be ſatisfied, that it is nothing elſe but a contrivance to make us heavenly; and intends to guide us to ſuch a Life as is a prevention of Heaven, a beginning of the celeſtial ſtate, whereby we ſhall live,

in part, as men of another World, and not of this.

Which future World, (2.) it is manifeſt, his heavenly Doctrine ſuppoſes; or elſe it would be ſo far from that Wiſedom which was eminent in him, that it would be the greateſt abſurdity that can be imagined. For it teaches us, if his ſervice require it, to deny our ſelves even in the moſt innocent and lawfull injoyments of this life; to forſake father and mother and houſes and lands for his Name's ſake; yea, to lay down our very lives, rather then forſake his Doctrine, and violate his commands. Theſe are expreſs Leſſons which his Sermons teach his Diſciples: but are things ſo ſublime, ſo much above the reach of fleſh and bloud, that it would be the vaineſt thing in the world to propoſe them to mens obſervance, without the hope of ſomething in another life to reward ſuch hard ſervices. He would have had no followers on theſe terms; had he not made it as plain and evident as the reſt of his Doctrine, that He would be the *Authour of Eternall Salvation* to them that would obey him. Men were not ſo fond of troubles and torments and death, as to expoſe themſelves to the danger of them,

them, if they had not ſeen the greateſt reaſon to believe, that their Maſter would recompenſe their preſent Sufferings with a future happineſs ſo incomparably greater, that it would be the higheſt folly to avoid them. None can ſuppoſe the Authour of ſuch a Religion to be ſo weak as not to underſtand, that men would never embrace this profeſſion; unleſs at the ſame time that he called them to this high pitch of piety, he *called them* alſo, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *to his kingdom and glory.* And therefore, without all doubt, our Lord took care to preach this as the principall thing, and to give good aſſurance of a bleſſed ſtate to come; becauſe without this it had been the moſt ungrounded and fooliſh undertaking that ever man went about, to perſwade the world to be ſo mortified, to quit all preſent poſſeſſions, and to part with their lives for his ſake. He muſt have been the moſt unreaſonable of all other men in preaching ſuch Doctrine, and ſuppoſed the World void of all reaſon, if he expected to have it believed; had he not been certain himſelf, and been able by evident proofs to perſwade others, that all thoſe who hearkened to him ſhould be no loſers, but exceeding great gainers, by quitting all

things upon his account. If he had not held this truth in his hands, as clear as the Sun, that they who would follow him ſhould be immortally happy; he might have ſtretcht them out long enough before he had drawn ſo much as one follower after him. The Trees would as ſoon have followed him as Men: who would never have ſtirr'd a foot in ſuch a narrow path, unleſs he had ſhewn them plainly that it led to Everlaſting Life.

Let us conſider and illuſtrate this a little. Would not he expoſe himſelf to laughter and ſcorn, that ſhould earneſtly perſwade his neighbours to go and labour hard in his fields all day, by which they ſhould get juſt nothing for their pains at night? Would it not ſeem a piece of ſtrange mockery and contempt of *us*, and as ſtrange a folly in *him* that ſhould invite us to enter into his ſervice, which he confeſſed would make us ſweat, and ingage us in many toilſome imployments; and when we inquired what wages he gave, ſhould be able to aſſure us never a farthing that lay in his power or will to beſtow upon us? Would they not be equally ridiculous, he that ſhould make, and they that ſhould embrace ſuch a propoſall?

poſall? Might not ſuch a trifler expect rather to be kickt, then to be followed by the multitude? Should we not hear them expreſſing their indignation in ſuch ſpeeches as theſe? What? Do you take us for arrant fools? Do you think we are mere Muſhromes? that our brains are made of a ſponge, or our heads ſtuft with wet ſtraw? What do you make of us? or what have we done, that argues us to be ſuch blocks and trunks as you ſuppoſe us? And yet ſuch was the conſtant preaching of our ever-Bleſſed Saviour, that if he had not made his promiſes as plain and certain as his commands, he would have been liable to ſuch language. For he calls men, as you reade in that Parable xx. *Matth.* to a laborious life of piety. From the beginning of his preaching to the end of it, he had no other deſign. *Early in the morning*, (verſ. 1.) when he firſt appeared in the world, *he went out:* and what was it to doe, but *to hire labourers into his vineyard?* At the *third hour* he went out again, and ſaid to thoſe whom he found idle, *Go ye alſo into the vineyard:* (verſ. 4.) At the *ſixth* and the *ninth* hour of his life he ſtill followed the ſame buſineſs. At the *eleventh* alſo (verſ. 6.) he finds other loiterers, and ſays to them alſo,

Why ſtand you here all the day idle? Would they have moved from their place, think you, if he had not *agreed with them* to pay them for their pains? Would they have returned no other anſwer but that, *No man hath hired us*; and not have alſo added, What will you give us? what ſhall we gain by our labour? had he not ſatisfied them about that matter? If there had been no wages to be expected, they had better have ſtood idle ſtill, or have ſtaid for ſome other Maſter. Had it not been evident, that the Lord of the vineyard was a wealthy perſon, able to give *every man his peny*, *i. e.* a reward for his ſervice; he might have called long enough, and ſeen his ground all overrun with briars and thorns, before he had procured any labourers to go into it. Certainly, if we will but allow our Saviour to have been a perſon of ordinary reaſon and common capacity, we cannot imagine he would have endured ſo long toil and travell, and walkt all the countrey of *Judæa* over, to win proſelytes to him; if he had not made it as viſible, that he would bring men to the bleſſed ſight of God in eternall reſt and peace, as it was, that he called them to a God-like life of piety, righte-

righteouſneſs and true holineſs during their ſtay in this preſent world. We muſt depreſs him into the rank of the moſt witleſs men; or elſe believe that He who required ſo much work from his ſervants, demonſtrated he was a good Maſter, rich, and furniſhed with the moſt ample rewards.

And therefore (3.) we may well believe that He *came* with ſuch Teſtimonies from above, from the *Father* and from the *Holy Ghoſt*, and intended *Himſelf* to appear from heaven as the Authour of Eternall Life; without which he could not have gone about to eſtabliſh ſuch a Doctrine; or if he had, would not have ſucceeded. One of theſe *Witneſſes* exceedingly juſtify the other; and are not to be divided. We have reaſon to think, a perſon of his Underſtanding, *who ſpake as never man ſpake*, (his very enemies being judges,) would not have attempted the ſettlement of ſuch a ſtrict rule of life as his Doctrine contains, without ſuch countenance from Heaven as I have mentioned, to perſwade the world that he would lead them thither. Though I muſt add, (4.) that the ſtrict purity and holineſs of his Doctrine ſingly conſidered is of great

weight and moment to perſwade us that ETERNALL LIFE is in him: becauſe this is a part, nay, a principall part, of his Doctrine. Which He, who in all other things that he ſaid was unreprovable, would not have affirmed ſo expreſly and conſtantly, if he had not been fully aſſured it was true.

Do but obſerve how this Doctrine is conſtantly intermixed with all his Sermons. It is the very ſtrain of his Preaching, that if any man would follow him, and doe as he did, he ſhould find reſt for his Soul; and that God *the Father* of all *would honour thoſe who did him ſervice.* xii *Joh.* 26. This he proclaims in the plaineſt terms, and the cleareſt manner. viii. *Joh.* 12. *I am the Light of the World:* (*Illuminator & Deductor humani generis,* as *Tertullian* excellently expreſſes it *, the Inlightner and the Conducter or guide of mankind:) *He that follows me ſhall have the light of life*; the wiſedom, that is, which ſhall lead him to immortall bliſs. And to make this more manifeſt, let it be noted, (1.) how he proclaims this to every man, iii. *Joh.* 15, 16. that the Son of man muſt die, *that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have eternall life,*

* *Apolog. cap.* xxi.

life. For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his onely-begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. And (2.) he aſſerts it with the greateſt earneſtneſs, with the ſtrongeſt and moſt vehement aſſeverations. vi. *Joh.* 47. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlaſting life.* He tells them alſo (3.) with the ſame aſſurance, that God *had ſealed him* for this purpoſe; or ſet a plain mark upon him, whereby all might ſee that he was to be the Authour of everlaſting life. vi. *Joh.* 27. And obſerve (4.) that, having told them it was viſible, if they pleaſed to open their eyes, that God the Father had deſigned him to give them immortall ſatisfaction, he repeats this Doctrine a great many times in that Chapter; verſ. 33,35, 39, 40, 47, 48, 51, 54, 57. Inſomuch that St. *Peter* concludes at the latter end of that Sermon, there was no Maſter comparable to him, who had *the words of eternall life:* ver. 68. And it is farther obſervable, that he affirms (5.) he came to bring his followers to the greateſt happineſs. x. *Joh.* 10. *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.* And (6.) that he tells them again, he came to publiſh this glad tidings

by

by the appointment of the Father. xii. *Joh.* 50. *I know that his commandment is life everlaſting: whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak.* And (7.) that he affirms, he hath power to make good what he promiſes. x. *Joh.* 28. *And I give unto them eternall life; and they ſhall not periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand.* xvii. 1, 2. *Glorify thy Son, as thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternall life to as many as thou haſt given him.* And, *laſtly*, he tells them that he was ſuch a perſon as might well be credited in all this; ſince he *came down from heaven*, and *was at that moment in heaven.* iii. *Joh.* 13. Which he repeats again viii. 23. *I am from above, I am not of this world:* and ver. 38. *I ſpeak that which I have ſeen with my Father:* and ver. 42. *I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of my ſelf, but he ſent me.* For which reaſon he doth not diſcourſe of immortall life as a Philoſopher, going about to prove it by reaſons and arguments; but onely aſſerts it as one that had Divine Authority, (for which he was to be believed,) and could himſelf make men eternally happy. This was the onely thing that could be diſputed and needed proof, that he came from heaven

heaven to illuminate the world by his inſtructions. And this he did not deſire they ſhould take upon his bare word, but abundantly demonſtrated it: and told them, ver. 28. that after his death they ſhould ſtill ſee it made more evident that *he did nothing of himſelf, but as the Father had taught him, he ſpake theſe things.* For then, as you ſhall ſee in due place, God the Father declared all theſe words to be true by raiſing him from the dead.

Theſe things he ſaid ſo often, ſo openly, ſo confidently, and with ſuch appeals to God, (who bare him witneſs, as you have heard, and never in the leaſt contradicted what he ſaid,) that we have great reaſon to believe he did not forge all this: but delivered the mind and will of God as ſincerely when he ſaid he would give men *Eternall Life*, as he did when he charged them to live *ſoberly*, *righteouſly* and *godly* in this preſent world. Certain it is, that He himſelf believed what he preached, and had no doubt, but a perfect aſſurance of it; as will appear if we paſs to the *Second* thing which we are briefly to conſider,

II.

II.

His own moſt holy Life, in the ſtricteſt obedience to God the Father. This *Abarbinell*, in his diſcourſe upon xi. *Iſa.* which I have ſo often mentioned, makes one of the marks of the *Meſſiah*; the perfect temper of his deſires and affections, and the direction of them according to the meaſures of the Divine Law. Which he thinks is the meaning of thoſe words, ver. 3. He ſhall be *of quick underſtanding in the fear of the Lord.* This was ſo remarkable in *Jeſus*, who was ſo truly, ſo compleatly and conſtantly pious, that there never was any perſon ſo qualified to lay claim to this Dignity as he was. His Life was ſo free from all blame, ſuch a perfect abſtinence from all the pleaſures of this world, ſuch a contempt of all that which we think moſt worthy of our indefatigable labours; that it hath a ſtrong force in it to perſwade us, that he indeed ſought Eternall Glory, and was fully aſſured he ſhould be poſſeſſed of it for Himſelf and for all His.

Who but a man ſo perſwaded of his Doctrine would have lived in poverty, when

when he might, no queſtion, by the multitude and devotion of his followers, have made himſelf incredibly rich? What ſhould incline him to remain all his days without an houſe ſo big as a fox or the ſmalleſt bird is owner of, but an expectation of that houſe which is eternall in the heavens? Could any thing move him to give away to the poor all that was given him, but a certain knowledge of great treaſures above? We cannot conceive what ſhould make him refuſe the dignity of a King, when the people intended to proclaim him; if it were not this undoubted perſwaſion, that he was the King of Heaven, and ſhould ſit down at the right hand of the Throne of God. Would any of thoſe that doubt this, labour as he did, night and day, for nothing? Would any poor man cure multitudes of all diſeaſes, and take not a farthing for his pains? Would any body live, if he could help it, and not know where he ſhould eat the next meal's meat? And who is he that can find in his heart to endure the hatred of the chiefeſt of the people, and to be in perpetuall danger of ſnares and treacherous deſigns for the taking away his life, without any hope to be a gainer by it? Is there any likelihood

lihood that our Lord would have laboured in ſuch ſort, as not to have leiſure ſo much as to eat, and after all that kind pains be content to be called Deceiver and Devill, and to run the hazzard of being ſtoned and killed; and yet have no aſſured expectation to reap ſome fruit hereafter from all his toil and trouble? Let him believe it that loves to ſting his fingers with nettles, or to roll his naked body in ſnow: we that have a more tender ſenſe of our own pleaſure muſt have leave to be of another mind. Let any man try to perſwade himſelf to lead ſuch a life; and by his unwillingneſs he will eaſily be convinced, that our Lord, who could look for nothing in this world from what he did and ſuffered, would never have ſo chearfully, freely, and without any regret, followed ſuch a courſe, had he not known as ſurely that he ſhould be made glorious thereby hereafter, as he knew that he muſt be made miſerable by it here.

Ask his *Poverty* then, and that will bear witneſs that he laid up treaſures in the heavens. Ask his *Humility*, and that will tell you that he ſought for the

Glory

Glory of God onely. Inquire of his *Charity* and *Bounty*, his wonderfull bounty to all men, and that will bear Record both that *all fulneſs* is in him, and that he will not envy any thing he hath to his followers. Let his *Contentedneſs* ſpeak, and that will aſſure you he was poſſeſſed of ſomething greater then all worldly goods; which he could tell better how to live without, then others to live comfortably withall. Examine his *Labours* and pains, his travells and journeys, trace his ſteps over ſea and land; and they will all confeſs that he ſought a better Country, which is an heavenly. Ask him what he meant by his *Patience*, his willing endurance of all reproaches, calumnies, hatreds, perſecutions; and they will likewiſe conclude in the ſame teſtimony, that he had *a joy ſet before him*, which made him deſpiſe them all. In ſhort, conſult his *Faſting* forty days, his enduring ſo many temptations of the Devill, ſlighting his offers, rejecting his counſels; and you can have no account of them but this, that he had indeed *the meat that endures to everlaſting life*; that he verily believed the voice from heaven, which ſaid he was the *Son of God*; and that he knew he had a greater Glory, then

then all the Kingdoms of the world which the Devill offered him.

And after all this, I ſuppoſe there is no conſidering man but will think the unqueſtionable belief of ſuch a perſon as he was, to be of very great moment to ſettle ours in this weighty buſineſs. It is ſafeſt for us, without all diſpute, to follow the judgment of one ſo well able to diſcern truth from falſhood, that he was *of as quick underſtanding* in all things elſe, as he was in the fear of the Lord. We have great reaſon to think that he was in the right; and was no more deluded himſelf, then he intended to delude others. There was not the leaſt flaw, as I ſhewed in the former Treatiſe, that appeared in his Underſtanding; nor could he be ſeduced into this belief by any earthly appetite or deſire: and therefore we ought to conclude, he was abundantly ſatisfied, by the moſt evident demonſtrations, that he ſhould live for ever, and be the Authour of Eternall Life to others: which, among other reaſons, ſhould very much ſatisfy us.

III.

III.

Who may farther conſider alſo the *Baptiſm* of that famous perſon St. *John* the *Baptiſt*. That is, his whole Miniſtry, which is comprehended under the name of his *Baptiſm*; as *Circumciſion* ſometimes includes the whole Law of *Moſes*. In this we ſhall find, if we examine it, a plain teſtimony to the great truth we are treating of, that ETERNALL LIFE is in *Jeſus* for all the faithfull. All that Nation who perſecuted our Saviour held *John* for a Prophet, and went to be baptized of him. Inſomuch that the wiſeſt of them durſt not affirm that his Commiſſion was *from men*, (or that he taught and baptized the people from a private motion of his own,) but rather that he undertook this office by authority *from heaven*. Upon which account they were bound to receive his teſtimony concerning our Saviour, as unqueſtionable: which they themſelves clearly diſcerned to be a good conſequence; and therefore would not reaſon this matter out with our Saviour, but let it fall to the ground, when they themſelves had begun the diſpute.

Now He teſtified as plainly that by him we ſhall have *Eternall Life*, as he did that he is the *Son of God*. For, (1.) as ſoon as ever he began to preach, he told them *the Kingdome of heaven was at hand*. iii. *Matt.* 2. Which language the *Jews* underſtood well enough, and therefore never askt what he meant: for ſo they had learnt, out of the Prophet *Daniel*, to call the Kingdome of *Chriſt*. Whoſe throne was to be erected by an heavenly power, and not by any humane means; and under whoſe government they expected the greateſt bleſſings that heaven ever meant to beſtow upon them. Now that under this name the *Baptiſt* comprehends the Eternall Felicity which *Chriſt* ſhould bring, is apparent from the expoſition which he makes of it, in the following part of the Chapter. Where he tells thoſe who were dubious, that he was not *the Chriſt*, but they might ſhortly expect him; and that when he came, he would *gather the wheat into his garner*, as well as *burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire*. iii. *Matt.* 12. This he ſaid when the chief of the *Jews* came to his *Baptiſm*: which was a teſtimony that *Jeſus*, who preſently came after him, was to open the *Kingdome of heaven*, and

and gather all pious men thither, as wheat into a garner. Which though it denote firſt of all the Church of *Chriſt*, yet muſt needs include in it the notion of a Church to be made exceeding glorious; becauſe the King of it hath his ſeat and throne no-where but in Heaven.

And then, (2.) after this the *Baptiſt* gave a more expreſs teſtimony of what they were to expect from *Jeſus*, when he ſaid, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſin of the World.* i. *Joh.* 29. Which words muſt needs intend (as hath been ſaid already) that He is to reſtore us to the favour of God wherein our firſt Parents ſtood, to take away that which ſeparates between God and us, and to make us capable of Paradiſe again.

And ſtill more expreſly (3.) he ſays, iii. *Joh.* 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlaſting life: and he that believeth not the Son ſhall not ſee life.* Unto which teſtimony our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf appeals v. *Joh.* 33. after he had been diſcourſing (ver. 25, 26, &c.) of his power to give life to mankind. Indeed there was a witneſs, he ſhews, which *in itſelf* was far ſtronger then this; and that was

the Works which he did: but this was a better witneſs *to them*, (and therefore our Saviour uſes it,) who durſt not affirm *John's Baptiſm* was not from heaven; whereas they boldly ſaid the works of our Saviour were not from thence, but from the Devill. This is the meaning of thoſe words that follow ver. 34, 35, 36. after his appeal to *John*'s witneſs; *But I receive not teſtimony from man: but theſe things I ſay that ye might be ſaved. He was a burning and ſhining light: and ye were willing for a ſeaſon to rejoyce in his light. But I have greater witneſs then that of John*, &c. That is, "Though I do not chiefly rely "on any humane teſtimony, ſuch as "*John*'s was, and indeed do not need it, "(having one more immediately divine "and heavenly:) yet for your ſakes, "who have a good opinion of him, and "own him for a Prophet, and whom I "would willingly convince and ſave by "any means, I inſtance in him ſo much, "and re-mind you of what he ſaid con-"cerning me. That which makes me "firſt of all ſpeak of his teſtimony, and "ſo often refer you to it, is not, becauſe "it is the firſt and chiefeſt in its own na-"ture, much leſs the onely teſtimony I "have; but becauſe I think it will be moſt

"ef-

" effectuall to doe you good: He being " in himſelf a moſt excellent perſon, ſhi- " ning among you in great wiſedom and " zeal; and alſo by you ſo eſteemed, and " received among you (at leaſt for a ſea- " ſon) with a great deal of ſatisfaction.

And to this now adde (4.) another thing, which I took notice of in the former Treatiſe, and muſt here juſt call to remembrance; that our Saviour himſelf was baptized of him at *Bethabara*, a place that denoted him to be the perſon who ſhould lead men to their Reſt, the *Joſhua* that ſhould conduct them into the land of promiſe: and you will confeſs this WATER we are ſpeaking of to be the Water of life, which, if we drink of it, will revive and chear our fainting ſpirits. If we do but receive, I mean, the Doctrine of the Lord *Jeſus* into our hearts; if we ſeriouſly conſider it together with the ſtrain of his Life; if we mark the office of St. *John Baptiſt*, the end of his Miniſtry, and the teſtimony which his *Baptiſm* gave to our Saviour; we ſhall find them all leading us into this comfortable belief, that He is the *Prince of life*, and that none can miſcarry who live as he taught, and tread in his ſteps; but have good

hopes in this world, which ſhall not make them aſhamed in the world to come.

IV.

This *Jeſus* himſelf alſo bad his Diſciples believe, by the ſame Authority whereby he baptized and gathered Diſciples to himſelf. Which none could doe, I ſhew'd you, as he did, but *the Chriſt*; in whoſe days the *Jews* expected an Univerſal Baptiſm and cleanſing of the people. Now the very end and intention of his *Baptiſm* was, it is very well known, for the *Remiſſion of ſins*, and conſequently for *Eternall life*. This he taught men to believe, and then authorized his Diſciples to receive men to theſe high and noble Privileges, by baptizing them in his Name. Upon which followed ſuch a marvellous change in their Souls, they were ſo inlightned, renewed and transformed, that Holy men doubted not to call this Baptiſm, (*a*) the *Water of Salvation*, the *Water of Life*, and the *immortall Nativity* (*b*.) Nay, St. *Auguſtine* informs us, that the *Punick* Chriſtians called Baptiſm by no other name then SALVATION; which he thought ſo proper, that he aſcribes it to an ancient and Apoſtolicall

(*a*) S. Cyprian. *epiſt. ad* Donatum, *& ad* Magnum.
(*b*) Optatus *L.* v.

ſtolicall tradition (*c*): And *Paſchaſius* calls it LIFE, in his Book of *the Body and bloud of our Lord*; where he ſays of thoſe who died ſhortly after Baptiſm, that *poſt perceptam vitam*, after they were made partakers of *life*, they in nothing declined from the way.

(*c*) L. i. *de Peccatorum meritis*, &c. c. 24.

And for this they had the Authority of our Saviour, who ſaid, after he was riſen from the dead, xvi. *Mark* 16. *He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved:* and ſhewed St. *John*, xxii. *Rev.* 1, 2. *a pure river of* WATER OF LIFE *clear as cryſtall, running through the midſt of the ſtreet* * *of the new Jeruſalem, from the throne of God and of the Lamb.* Which is a plain deſcription of the place of *Baptiſm*, appointed by God and our Saviour, in the midſt of Chriſtian aſſemblies, (called *Streets*, becauſe they are the place of concourſe,) for the purifying of the world, and reſtoring us to Paradiſe again. And he calls his *Baptiſm* WATER OF LIFE, becauſe it runs thither; and there we begin to *live* *, and are admitted to the friendſhip of God, and put in aſſured hope that the *Life* which then begins ſhall be continued to *Eternall life*. It is uſuall with the ancient Writers of Chriſtianity, to

* So *Andreas Caſar.* joyns the beginning of ver. 2. to ver. 1.

* S. Baſil. ἀρχὴ μὲν ζωῆς τὸ βάπτισμα. L. *de Spiritu S.* c. x.

ſpeak of a μεταποίησις inſtauration, μετάπλασις a transformation, μετασχηματισμὸς a transfiguration of mens Souls in *Baptiſm:* by which, ſays St. *Baſil*, the Soul ſo gliſters, that ὁ Θεὸς οἱονεὶ θρόνον αὐτὴν ἑαυτῷ ἀπεργάζεται *, God forms it to himſelf to be as it were his Throne. And ſo St. *Cyprian* teſtifies of himſelf, in his Epiſtle to *Donatus*, that though he was perplexed in ſo many errours, as made him think he could never be rid of them, and ſo led away by thoſe vices which ſtuck cloſe to him, that deſpairing to doe better he began to favour them, as things proper to him: yet when he had received Baptiſm, *a light from above came ſtreaming into him, a celeſtiall breath repaired him into a new man; and after a wonderfull manner he was confirmed in thoſe things which ſeemed dubious, and ſaw thoſe things clearly which before were obſcure, and found a power to doe that which he judged not onely difficult, but impoſſible.*

* *in Pſal.* xxix.

Now this change which they felt in their thoughts, deſires, and paſſions, as ſoon as they were baptized, was a powerfull argument to perſwade them, that they ſhould as really riſe from the dead and live eternally, as they were now quick-

quickned, when they lay dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, to the life of God and true piety. Which was the reaſon that they choſe *Eaſter*, rather then any other time, as the moſt proper ſeaſon for the receiving the grace of *Baptiſm*. So the ſame St. *Baſil* tells us, that *every day, every hour, every moment is a time for Baptiſm; but there is none ſo fit, as the* χρόνος οἰκειότερος, *the more proper and peculiar ſeaſon for it, which is Eaſter-day. For the day is* μνημόσυνον ἀναςάσεως *a memoriall of the Reſurrection, and Baptiſm is* δύναμις πρὸς τὴν ἀνάςασιν *a power granted us to riſe again. So that on the day of the Reſurrection, we ſhould receive the grace of the Reſurrection. And therefore the Church calls on thoſe whom ſhe hath conceived and travelled withall a good while, that now ſhe may bring them forth.* This belief they were deſirous, by all means, to impreſs upon mens minds; and would have them look upon Baptiſm *as the ſeal of a ſecond life* *. In which they could not be deceived; finding ſuch a beginning of it already, as teſtified the mighty power of God working in them.

Exhortat. ad Baptiſmum.

* Greg. Naz. *Carm. iamb.* Λυτρὸν δεῖ λυτέον βίε σφεγγίς.

And therefore St. *Paul* with great reaſon alledges Baptiſm as a publick *witneſs* to

to the faith of the Church, about the Reſurrection of the dead, and the Life of the world to come. 1. *Cor.* xv. 29. *Elſe what ſhall they doe which are baptized for the dead, if the dead riſe not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?* The *Reſurrection* of the dead was ſo much the hope of Chriſtians, and *Baptiſm* gave ſuch ſtrength to their hope, that when any perſon, newly inſtructed in the Chriſtian faith, died before he could receive Baptiſm, ſome of his Friends, it is reported from *Irenæus*, received it after his departure in his Name. To what purpoſe doe they this? ſays the Apoſtle, (if he have reſpect to this cuſtom,) why do they thus trouble themſelves, if they look for nothing after death? This ſhews, that even thoſe who were miſtaken in other things (as in this about baptizing for their deceaſed Friends) thought the dead were not loſt, but that there was hope of their future happineſs: elſe they would not ſtill have continued to aſſiſt them, and taken all the care they could that they might not be prejudiced for want of Baptiſm, which in their ſtead they received. They would not have been ſo ſenſeleſs, as to concern themſelves to doe any thing for thoſe who were gone from this world;

if

if they had not believed another, and lookt upon them as capable there of *Eternall Life.* Into the belief and expectation of which all Chriſtians whatſoever were baptized: which perhaps is all that the Apoſtle means by this Queſtion, *Why are they baptized for the dead?* Which *Rigaltius* * thus interprets, *Why are they baptized ut mortui reſurgant, that after death they may riſe again? why are they askt at the Font, whether they believe the reſurrection of the dead?* So that *for the dead,* is for themſelves, in hope of what ſhall follow after death, *viz.* a bleſſed Reſurrection.

* *In Tertul. de Reſurrect. carnis c. 48.*

Which is the interpretation of St. *Chryſoſtome,* (as I have obſerved elſewhere *;) who alſo bids us take notice, how that which they expreſſed in words, when they profeſſed to believe this great Article of the Chriſtian Faith, was alſo repreſented, as in an Image, by the very act of Baptiſm. In which *the going into the water, and the coming out, was a ſign of their deſcending to the ſtate of the dead, and of their aſcending from thence to life again.* There is no man that is baptized, but by the very rite and manner of it profeſſes to die, at leaſt, to ſin, and to riſe again

* *Aqua Genitalis.*

again to newneſs of life. This Death and Reſurrection (as the Apoſtle teaches vi. *Rom.* 3, 4, 5.) is moſt lively repreſented there. But this is not all that is intended by it: for even thoſe * who in that ſenſe were already mortified and renewed by receiving the Holy Ghoſt before their baptiſm, (as *Cornelius* and his family,) proceeded notwithſtanding to receive that holy waſhing; and by their *ſubmerſion* took upon them the likeneſs of the dead, and by their *emerſion* appeared as men riſen again from the dead. If there were no other death to be eſcaped but that in ſin, and no other reſurrection to be expected but that to newneſs of life; why were they, who had attained theſe, baptized as dead men? and being already dead to ſin, why again ſuſtained they the image of death, out of which they believed and profeſſed they ſhould come? This very action of theirs proves that they lookt for another reſurrection after death; which is the reſurrection of the body. And this profeſſion of theirs was ſo much the more weighty, as they were the more learned and inſtructed, being already taught by the Holy Ghoſt. By whoſe power they were already dead to ſin, and made alive to God; and by whoſe

* Arias Montanus.

whoſe inſtruction they profeſſed to believe, that as there is another death, *viz.* that of the body, ſo they ſhould overcome it by the mighty power of *Chriſt*, raiſing their very bodies from the dead.

There are ſeverall other interpretations of this place; as that of *Epiphanius* *, who expounds it of thoſe who received Baptiſm at the *point of death:* but I ſhall not trouble the Reader with them, becauſe they all conclude the ſame thing, that Baptiſm was a publick profeſſion of the hope of immortality; and a Seal alſo of the promiſes of God, not onely to that particular perſon who at any time received it, but to the whole Church, both to the living and the dead. Who, as oft as Baptiſm was repeated, had an open aſſurance given them from God, (by whoſe authority it was adminiſtred,) that they ſhould riſe again to everlaſting life.

* *Hæreſi* 38.

And ſo I ſhall diſmiſs this *Firſt* Witneſs on *Earth:* which is the more to be regarded, becauſe, though it be not ſo great in it ſelf as thoſe which ſpeak from heaven, yet to us it is very conſiderable; and cannot be denied by thoſe who cavill

vill at ſome of the other. For all men acknowledge the Life and Doctrine of our Saviour to be incomparably excellent; and *John* the *Baptiſt* ſtands upon record in *Joſephus* for a perſon of ſevere and ſtrict ſanctity; and the whole Chriſtian Church (who were not ſo childiſh as to build their hope on a ſandy foundation, but ſtood immovable (as you ſhall hear) like a houſe upon a rock, when all the world ſtorm'd and made the moſt furious aſſaults upon them,) believed thus from the beginning: as appears by their holy profeſſion which they made when they entred into the gates of the Church by *Baptiſm*.

The mighty power of which WATER OF LIFE they have thus celebrated with their praiſes. *Baptiſm is the Splendour of the Soul, the Change of the life, the Anſwer of the Conſcience towards God. It is the help of our weakneſs, the putting off the fleſh, the attainment of the Spirit, the Communion of the Word, the Reformation of God's workmanſhip, the drowning of Sin, the participation of light, and the deſtruction of darkneſs. It is the Chariot which carries us to God, our fellow-travelling with Chriſt, the eſtabliſhment.*

Greg. Naz. Orat. xl.

*bliſhment of our faith, the perfecting of our minds, the key of the Kingdom of heaven, the foundation of a ſecond life *. At this the heavens rejoyce: this the Angels magnify, as of kin to their brightneſs: this is the Image of their bleſſedneſs. We would willingly praiſe this, if we could ſay any thing worthy of it.*

* Κεφαλὴ ἀναστάσεως. Orat. xi.

Let us never ceaſe however *to give him thanks who is the Authour of ſuch a gift; returning him the ſmall tribute of a chearfull voice for ſuch great things as he hath beſtowed on us. For thou truly, O Lord, art the pure and perpetuall fountain of Goodneſs; who waſt juſtly offended at us, but haſt in much love had mercy on us: who hatedſt us, but art reconciled to us: who pronouncedſt a curſe upon us, but haſt given us thy bleſſing: who didſt expell us from Paradiſe, but haſt called us back again unto it. Thou haſt taken away the fig-leaf covering of our nakedneſs, and cloathed us with a moſt precious garment. Thou haſt opened the priſon-doors, and diſmiſſed thoſe that ſtood condemned. Thou haſt ſprinkled us with pure water, and cleanſed us from all our filthineſs. Adam, if thou calleſt him, will be no longer aſhamed: he will not hide himſelf, nor run away from thee.* Greg. Nyſſen. L. de Baptiſmo Chriſti.

The

The flaming ſword doth not now incircle Paradiſe, making it inacceſſible to thoſe that approach it; but all things are turned into joy to us who were heirs of ſin and death. Paradiſe, and Heaven it ſelf, is now open to mankind. The Creation, both here and above, conſents to be friends after a long enmity. Men and Angels are piouſly agreed in the ſame Theology.

For all which Bleſſings let us unanimouſly ſing that Hymn of joy which the inſpired mouth in ancient times loudly propheſied. I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my Soul ſhall be joyfull in my God: For he hath cloathed me with the garments of Salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs; he hath decked me with ornaments as a bridegroom, and as a bride adorned me with jewels. lxi. *Iſa.* 10. *This adorner of the Bride is Chriſt; who is, and who was before, and who will be bleſſed both now and for ever.* Amen.

CHAP.

Chap. X.

Concerning the Teſtimony of the BLOUD, *the* Second *Witneſs on Earth.*

THE next *Witneſs* which comes in order to be examined is the BLOUD: by which, I told you, we are to underſtand the *Crucifixion* and *Death* of the Lord *Jeſus*, with all the attendants of it. This is a *Witneſs* which the greateſt enemies of Chriſtianity cannot but confeſs was heard to ſpeak in his behalf. The ſtubborn *Jews*, who will be loth to grant that a voice from heaven declared him the *Son of God*, cannot deny that their forefathers imbrued their hands in his *bloud*. For in the *Babylonian Talmud* * it is delivered as a tradition among them, that "*they hanged Jeſus* "כערב הפסח *in the evening of the Paſſeover:* and that a Crier went before him "forty days, ſaying, He is to be carried forth "to be ſtoned, for conjuring and drawing "*Iſrael* to Apoſtaſy. If any one can ſpeak "any thing for him to prove him inno-"cent, let him appear. It is an hard matter

* Vid. *Horæ Hebr. in Matt.* p. 319. & *Izemach David ad an.* 3761.

to have any truth from theſe fabulous people, without the mixture of a tale together with it. When they cannot gainſay what we believe, that their Nation were the great Inſtruments of his death, they endeavour to find falſe reaſons for ſo villanous a Murther.

But they granting that his *Blood* was ſhed by them, we ſhall ſoon prove it was for another cauſe; even that which is recorded in our Books. Which none ever undertook to confute, though they were put forth in the face both of *Jews* and *Romans:* who might long ſince have expoſed our Religion to ſhame, if *Pontius Pilate* could have averred out of the Records of the Court where our Saviour was judged, that things were not ſo as his Diſciples have related. And that this *Blood* of his ſo ſhed, and upon ſuch an account as we have received, is of very great force to induce us to believe another World, and an eternall Happineſs there for us with *Jeſus*, I am now to demonſtrate; and ſhall eaſily make good, unleſs we will entertain ſuch low and ſlight thoughts of him, as no man can ſuffer to lodge in his mind, who attends to the Doctrine he preached, and all the arguments

arguments which prove him to be the *Son of God.* That alone indeed is ſufficient to juſtify all that he preached; particularly, that God by him will give *Eternall Life* to thoſe that obey him. If he be ſo nearly related to God, (as even his *Bloudy* Death, I ſhew'd in the former Treatiſe, proved him to be,) we may believe him when he ſays that, *As the Father hath life in himſelf, ſo hath he given to the Son to have life in himſelf.* But I ſhall wave this generall way of reaſoning, though undeniable; and offer ſome things more particular to every one's ſerious conſideration.

I. It is apparent by the whole ſtory, which it would be too long to relate, that to lay down his life was an act perfectly voluntary in our Saviour, who, if he had pleaſed, might have avoided it. He might have choſen whether he would have died or no: for *no man* (as he ſaid x. *Joh.* 18.) *could take his life away, but he laid it down of himſelf*; openly profeſſing, *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* He need not have faln into their cruel hands, it is plain, unleſs he had freely conſented to it. And when they were about to apprehend him,

many legions of Angels were ready for his reſcue, if he had pleaſed to lay his commands upon them. xxvi. *Matt.* 53. Nay, when he made the Souldiers feel his power, ſo that *they went backward, and fell to the ground,* (xviii. *Joh.* 6.) he could withall have eſcaped and gone his ways, as he had done at other times; when this reaſon alone is given why they did not apprehend him, as they attempted, *becauſe his hour was not yet come:* vii. *Joh.* 30. viii. 20. that is, He did not ſee it to be the fitteſt time for him to reſign up himſelf to their power.

Now it cannot enter into man's deliberate thoughts, that he would have ſo freely, without any conſtraint or reſiſtence, given up his life; eſpecially when by preſerving it he might have lived in great repute, eſteem and admiration of the people, yea, have been honoured for eſcaping out of the hands of his enemies; if he had not been ſure of ETERNALL LIFE and a greater glory in the Heavens, which he ſhould win by going ſo willingly out of this preſent world. *He that ſaved others,* could ſurely have *ſaved himſelf,* and ſpoiled their jeer; (xxvii. *Matt.* 42.) if his will had not been other-

otherwiſe reſolved. He that raiſed *Lazarus* from the dead, could have more eaſily ſtruck all his oppoſers dead at his feet; if it had been his pleaſure. What ſhould make his will then thus bent upon death? What hindred the putting forth of his power for himſelf, which it is manifeſt he ſo often uſed for the benefit of others? What could move him ſo tamely, like a Lamb, to give his throat to the bloudy knife, and to hang ſo meekly upon an infamous croſs; if it were not the contemplation of an incomparable felicity which he hoped to obtain, by his Obedience to God, and bearing witneſs to the Truth?

All men of ſenſe cannot chuſe but look upon this as an undoubted Argument, that he himſelf ſtedfaſtly believed, and had good aſſurance of, the truth of what he preached. For who is there that can find in his heart to die, and die in ſuch a manner, ſo painfully and with ſuch ignominy, for that which he thinks in his conſcience is falſe, nay, does not know to be certain? It is next to an impoſſibility, that any man in his wits ſhould ſo far forget himſelf, as to be forward to throw away all he hath, againſt the

ſtrongeſt inclinations and perſwaſions of nature, which abhors death, and moſt of all a cruell and diſgracefull death, merely to juſtifie a lie; which humane Nature is aſhamed of, without the help of torments to make it odious. There have been ſundry examples of raſhneſs and fooliſh boldneſs; but none can be produced, nor eaſily imagined, of ſuch an one as this. For what can a man propoſe to himſelf, who lays his life at the ſtake, to make good that which he believes hath no truth in it? What can he hope to get by ſuch a mad reſolved obſtinacy? No man attempts any thing without an end; much leſs will he expoſe his life to the leaſt hazzard, without a cauſe of ſome moment. What can you ſee then in this caſe weighty enough to be caſt into the balance againſt a man's life, which ſhould make him ſacrifice it freely, as our Saviour did? Riches, and all the Pleaſures they can provide for us, could be of no conſideration; becauſe they will doe a man no ſervice when he is dead, and our Saviour had no poſterity to whom to leave them. Honour and Fame alſo ſeem to be of as little value; for what ſatisfaction is it to be talkt of in the world, when we have left it, and hear nothing

of

of what is done in it? Yet this is all that can be imagined to have any power in this buſineſs. One may poſſibly, you may fanſy, for to get a great Name in the world by being the Authour of a new Opinion or Sect, throw away his life; though he know that he doth but broach a lie. A ſtrange ſuppoſition this is, which a man in his right ſenſes, one would think, ſhould not be inclined to make. But ſince ſome have pretended it is poſſible, I ſhall briefly ſhew that it could have no hand in our Saviour's Sufferings. As will appear if we conſider, either the Circumſtances of his Death, or the quality of his Doctrine, or the manner of his Life.

II. The Circumſtances of his *Death* were ſuch, that if they be but a little examined, you will preſently find there is no place for this conceit. For (1.) it ſtands upon good record, that He himſelf knew of his death beforehand, and foretold it, with the manner of it: and yet was ſo far from endeavouring to avoid it, that he went of his own accord to the very place where he knew they would come to apprehend him. This is a plain declaration that he was no Impoſtour.

For though you may fanſy a man tickled with ſo much vain-glory, that he will not ſtick to embrace death, when he cannot evade it, rather then unſay what he hath publiſhed, though he know it to be falſe: yet this is all that can with any colour be ſuppoſed. No ſuch perſon can be conceived willing to ſeek death, to offer himſelf to it, to go to the very place where he knows it waits for him, (when he may as well avoid it,) and deſignedly put himſelf into thoſe hands which it is apparent are reſolved to kill him. No; though fame be his deſign, yet the preſervation of his life, without all doubt, is his greater concernment: and if he can, he will enjoy both, his fame together with his life.

But if any body will be ſo extravagant as to fanſy, that He might intend to get fame, even by running himſelf into this danger; let him obſerve farther, (2.) what our Saviour met withall in his paſſage to his death, which would have ſtopt ſuch vain forwardneſs. For there was ſomething ſo dreadfull appeared to him in the way to his Paſſion, that when it approached *he fell into an Agony.* A great horrour ſeized on him, which declared

clared how much Nature was againſt his proceeding. Whoſe ſtrong and violent inclinations would have prevailed againſt a fancy and vain humour; if he had not known that he was ingaged in a good Cauſe, and did not deceive the World. Such terrible apprehenſions as then preſented themſelves, would have made him take the opportunity of the night, and conſult for his ſafety; if he had been a Deceiver, and not very well aſſured that this was the way to everlaſting Life.

And then, if you conſider again (3.) that he was not haſtily hurried to the gibbet, but had a long time to weigh what he was about to ſuffer; it will ſeem incredible that he ſhould not repent of his obſtinacy, if he had been conſcious to himſelf of any falſhood. For though in a ſudden heat of mad zeal a man may be ſuppoſed ſo fooliſh, as to maintain an untruth with the hazzard of his life: yet the ſight of long-continued torments ſet a great while before his eyes, would make him in all likelihood confeſs the truth.

But

But (4.) that which quite overthrows this idle ſuppoſition is, that the kind of his death was ſuch as could procure him nothing leſs then glory and fame: there being nothing more infamous and reproachful then to die like a vile ſlave upon a Croſs. This he could not but foreſee would expoſe him to the ſcorn of all the World; did not ſomething elſe gain him more credit then this could do diſgrace. And ſo it proved afterward; notwithſtanding all the Miracles he had wrought, his Crucifixion was the laughter of the Gentiles, and a ſtumbling-block to the *Jews*. From whence we may conclude that, if we will but allow him to be a man of common ſenſe, he would not have taken this way of all other to procure fame. No courſe he could have thought of to propagate his Doctrine would have been more mad then this; if it were not taken, as in all reaſon it ought to be, for a token of his ſincerity and truth in what he preached: which would be publiſhed, he knew, to his immortall honour and glory in all the world.

But dying ſuch a death as he did, there could be no hope, it muſt be farther con-

conſidered, (5.) that his Doctrine ſhould be ſo much as publiſhed by his followers, much leſs received by others; unleſs he were both ſure himſelf that it was the truth, and that he could make the truth of it appear to them. And then what would have become of all the glory, for which it is ſuppoſed he might be tempted to part with his life? All that he could doe to ſecure his Diſciples, that he preached nothing but the truth, and to incourage them alſo to preach *Chriſt* crucified, (which was a moſt odious and dangerous undertaking,) was to tell them that He would riſe again the third day, and appear alive to them. Now it is as manifeſt as the Sun, that, if he knew himſelf to be an Impoſtour, he could have no hope that God would raiſe him up again: and it is as manifeſt on the other ſide, that, if he did not riſe again, there was no hope that his Apoſtles would preach him, becauſe he had proved himſelf a liar: and if he was not preached by them, there could be no hope of glory and fame: and, conſequently, he would never have died in expectation of that, which, if he did but abuſe the World, he knew could not poſſibly attend upon his Name. For it is viſible, it muſt either

ther have been buried in ſilence, or elſe remembred with reproach; He himſelf having blaſted it, by failing in the performance of his word.

But I have ſaid enough of this, and therefore ſhall conſider onely one thing more, (6.) what it was that comforted our Saviour and ſupported his ſpirit upon the Croſs. Was it the hopes he had to be cried up by his followers, and magnified every-where, when he was dead and gone, for a man of an invincible ſpirit? No; He comforted himſelf with the thoughts of his own integrity: He humbly addreſſed himſelf in prayer to God: He relieved himſelf with the thoughts that he was his Father; to whom therefore he commends his ſpirit, and breathed out his Soul in a pious confidence that He would receive it, and glorify him in the heavens. For a little before he ſuffered, he lift up his eyes thither, as St. *John* teſtifies, and ſaid, *Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee*, &c. *I have glorified thee on earth, I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to doe: And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thy own ſelf, with the glory I had with thee before*

before the World was. xvii. *Joh.* 1, 4, 5. And when the moment of his departure was come, and he was juſt expiring on the Croſs, *He cried out with a loud voice,* that all might hear him, *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit. And having thus ſaid, he gave up the ghoſt.*

He that ſhall impute all this alſo to vain-glory, we may rather conclude takes a pride in cavilling and contradicting; and hath loſt all ſenſe of the Nature of man, which finds no inclinations in it to be thus audacious. For how can he repoſe any hope in God, who at that very inſtant when he expreſſes it is committing the greateſt open affront unto him imaginable? Our Bleſſed Saviour was ever a devout worſhipper of him, and in all his ways acknowledged him: and therefore ſince he did thus ſeriouſly betake himſelf to him in his ſoreſt diſtreſs, it is apparent he was perſwaded of his own ſincerity and truth: which God the ſearcher of all hearts knew; to whom therefore he appeals, and was confident he ſhould live with him for ever, and be able to give Eternall Life to others.

III.

III. But what need is there to inſiſt any longer upon ſuch conſiderations as theſe, when his *Doctrine* (which is the *Second* thing I mentioned) is ſo holy and pure, ſo heavenly and divine, that the conſtant preacher of ſuch things could not be guilty of ſo great an impiety, as to call the God of heaven at laſt to bear witneſs to a known untruth? No; it condemns leſſer lies to ſo ſevere a puniſhment, that to ſay, he was ſent of God with the words of Eternall life, nay, was *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, when he knew he was not, deſerved, according to his own ſentence, the heavieſt condemnation.

To which if you add the *manner of his Life*, which was the *laſt* thing, it will compleat the Demonſtration. For it was ſo perfectly conformable to his Doctrine, that we cannot but think he believed it; and ſo could not die with a lie in his mouth. Particularly, it was ſo free from all covetous deſigns, and from hunting after the applauſe and praiſe of men; that it is incredible he ſhould ſeek that by death, which he had deſpiſed through the whole courſe of his life. If he was ſo thirſty

thirſty of vain-glory, as to loſe his life for it; why did he not make it his buſineſs to win all he could of it, while he lived? Why did he not lay the foundation of his after-fame, by inſinuating himſelf, in the moſt diligent and men-pleaſing manner, into the favour of all the *Jewiſh* nation? and conform himſelf ſo perfectly to their humour, that they might have preſently made him their King? Nay, why did he not accept the offer, when the people intended to advance him to the throne? This had been a more likely way to honour and renown, if that was all his aim, then the lifting him up upon a Croſs. He might have hoped to build a laſting glory on the love of the Scribes and Elders of the people: whereas this infamous death, he could not but ſee, would make him ſo odious, that it would rob him of all mens good word, and quite fruſtrate the deſign of winning a reputation among men. This is a truth of which I preſume, by this time, the moſt ſuſpicious and unbelieving are convinced: who cannot but confeſs that the voluntary death of ſuch a perſon as this, and a death ſo horrid and ignominious, is a plain teſtimony of his ſincerity; and proves, beyond any reaſonable contradiction, that he did not

not invent his Doctrine himſelf, but believed it to be of God; and did not ſeek to gain any thing by it but immortall life and glory in the world to come.

IV. Now that we muſt needs be great gainers hereby as well as himſelf, will appear, if you conſider that he came into the world on purpoſe to doe mankind good, as the buſineſs of his whole life teſtifies. He *went about doing good*, and ſought all occaſions of obliging even the moſt ungratefull. He had compaſſion on every body he met withall, and never denied a cure to thoſe that begg'd it; though they were never ſo poor and contemptible. He imployed his Diſciples alſo, who attended on him, in the ſame charitable works, of healing all manner of diſeaſes, and caſting out unclean ſpirits. He bad them go, and ſpeak *peace unto every houſe* into which they entred. And as for themſelves, he profeſſed the greateſt love imaginable to them, as they themſelves have recorded. He called them his *Friends*, and did not uſe them as *Servants*; nay, his *Children*, and at laſt his *Brethren*: which are all terms of much kindneſs and tenderneſs, which he ever expreſſed towards them. From whence

I con-

I conclude that, unleſs he could have ſerved them better by his death then by his longer life, he would not have ſo ſoon and ſo willingly gone to the Croſs, and there left theſe dear Friends, for whoſe ſake he had hitherto lived more then his own. If he had not died for their ſake too, and been certain he ſhould thereby ſhew more love to them, and doe them better ſervice then any other way; he would have been as much inclined to ſtay ſtill with them, as they were to deſire it.

He ſaw how loth they were to part with him; and with what ſad countenances and troubled ſpirits they received the news. He was incompaſſed with ſighs and groans when he did but mention it; for *ſorrow* (as he ſpeaks xvi. *Joh.* 6.) *had filled their hearts.* Would not this have moved a heart leſs tender then his, to alter this reſolution, when it was in his power to ſtay longer with them? How could he endure to ſee their tears flow ſo faſt, when he was able to dry them up with the ſpeaking but one word, that he would not leave them? If he had not been ſure that he was *going*, as he told them, *to his Father*, and that it was on

purpoſe *to prepare a place for them*, which ought to have made them *rejoyce* rather then weep, becauſe *he would come again, and receive them to himſelf, that where he was, there they might be alſo*; (xiv. *Joh.* 1, 2, 3, 28.) without all doubt his great love would have yielded to their prayers, and commanded his power to prolong their happineſs in his company. He ſhould be able, he verily believed, to doe greater wonders for them, and beſtow greater bleſſings upon them, if he did not hearken to their importunities; or elſe we cannot but think (if we meaſure him by our ſelves) he would have ſtill continued with theſe his dear Companions: eſpecially ſince none, as he profeſſed, could ſnatch him from their ſociety, but it was his own free choice to leave them.

V. And he earneſtly deſired *them* to believe as much, and to look upon his BLOUD as the Seal of a *New Covenant*, which contained better promiſes then the former, between God and men. So he ſaid, juſt before his death, when he ſpoke of the Repreſentation of it, *This is my BLOUD of the New Teſtament* (or *Covenant*) *which is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins.* xxvi. *Matt.* 28. And ſo the

the Apoſtles believed and ſpake of his BLOUD in the ſame terms; when by his reſurrection from the dead they ſaw that it was *the BLOUD of the Covenant*, x. *Heb.* 29. and that he was moſt eminent for this above all other things, as the expreſſion is xiii. *Heb.* 20. where the Apoſtle calls him the *Shepherd of the ſheep,* ὁ μέγας ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου, *who was great in the bloud of the everlaſting Covenant.* Now this is one Article every body knows, (one of the promiſes contained in it,) that we ſhall as certainly have *Eternall Life*, as *Iſrael* in due time was brought to the poſſeſſion of the good Land God promiſed to their Fathers.

Abraham, you reade xv. *Gen.* 7. had the word of God for it, that he would give his poſterity the Land of *Canaan*, into which he had brought him out of *Chaldæa.* And when he made ſo bold as to ask how he ſhould know that this was true, you find (ver. 9, 10, 11.) that God paſſed this promiſe into a Covenant, which was made by the bloud of ſundry beaſts: whoſe bodies being divided, and the halves laid one againſt another, *a ſmoaking furnace* appeared and *a lamp of*

fire, (repreſenting a Divine Preſence,) which paſſed between thoſe pieces, (ver. 17.) according to the cuſtom in thoſe days of making Covenants, by the parties going between a beaſt ſo cut aſunder. In like manner our Bleſſed Lord and Saviour promiſed more then once or twice the *Kingdom of Heaven* to all his followers, moſt earneſtly intreating them to believe it. And leſt they ſhould doubt of it, he proceeds at laſt of his own accord to ingage himſelf to beſtow it, by entring into a ſolemn Covenant with them. Which was ratified, not by the bloud of beaſts, and the cutting their bodies in pieces; but by his own moſt *precious bloud*, and by ſuffering nails to be thruſt through his own fleſh: that he might confirm us in the belief of his *promiſe of an eternall inheritance.* ix. *Heb.* 15.

VI. And great reaſon there is we ſhould be confirmed by it in this belief. For what could he doe more to aſſure us he meant as he ſpake, then to ſeal it with his bloud? The Apoſtles juſtly took this to be τὸ μαρτύριον, an eminent *teſtimony* or WITNESSE to the truth of that which he preached. So you reade

reade 1 *Tim.* ii. 6. *He gave himſelf a ranſome for all,* τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῖς ἴδιοις, *a teſtimony in due time.* That is, "He be-
"came the price of our Redemption, and,
"like the Paſchal Lamb, his bloud ſaves
"us from the deſtroyer, and aſſures us
"God will bring us to our Eternall Reſt;
"of which we cannot reaſonably doubt,
"ſince his giving himſelf thus to die for
"us is an evident teſtimony of God's
"great love to men, and of his *will*
"(which he ſpake of before ver. 4.) *to*
"*ſave all men*; by pardoning their of-
"fences, and bringing them to Eter-
"nall life for *Jeſus* his ſake. His blou-
"dy death was an unqueſtionable *Wit-*
"*neſs*, as St. *John* here calls it, of the
"truth of his promiſe; which he con-
"firmed and ſealed in this ſolemn man-
"ner, by dying on the Croſs to verify
"it. And this he did at that very *time*,
"or *ſeaſon*, which was moſt *fit* and *pro-*
"*per* for ſuch a buſineſs: (juſt when
"the Prophets ſaid he ſhould doe it:)
"for in thoſe days (as we reade ii. *Luk.*
"38.) *they looked for redemption in Je-*
"*ruſalem.*

And he could not ſatisfie their expectation by any better means then this; which

was *illud Teſtimonium*, as *Eraſmus* renders it, *that Teſtimony*, that remarkable *Witneſs* which none can juſtly queſtion. For it is taken by all for certain, that He doth not intend to deceive, *qui morte ſuâ fidem fecit*, who ſeals what he ſaith with his bloud. This Μαρτύριον *Teſtimony*, I may adde, or WITNESS to the truth of what he preached, was moſt properly *his own* Teſtimony. There were ſundry others; but none, while he was on earth, ſo peculiarly *his* as this: which was all he could doe to juſtify himſelf and his Doctrine. The *Voice from heaven* was a Witneſs, as you have heard; but that was the teſtimony of the Father. His *Doctrine* was a Witneſs; but he ſaith of that, *it is not mine, but his that ſent me.* vii. *Joh.* 16. His *Works* or Miracles were a Witneſs, as he ſays v. *Joh.* 36. but in the ſame place he adds, that they were *the works which his Father gave him to finiſh*; and xiv. 10. *My Father doeth the Works.* But as for his moſt precious BLOUD, it was that, and that alone, whereby *He himſelf* witneſſed the truth to us. *For this cauſe he came into the world*, as he tells *Pilate*, xviii. 37. and it was a free act of his own: for which reaſon he is ſaid to *give himſelf* for us, and to *lay down*

down his life; there being none, as I ſaid before, that had power, without his conſent, to take it away from him. And therefore it may well be called Τὸ μαρτύριον, *That teſtimony*, whereby *He* more peculiarly witneſſed, that *this was the will of him that ſent him, that every one who ſaw the Son, and believed on him, ſhould have everlaſting life.* This he preached all his life, and he juſtified it to be true by his Death. When they would have had him revoke what he had ſaid, and deny that he was ſent upon this meſſage by God, he maintained it to the laſt drop of his bloud. Which was as much as could be done for the verifying of his Doctrine, and aſſuring the World that he ſincerely publiſhed the will of Heaven. For who can doe more then die for the truth which he aſſerts?

But he having thus atteſted by dying, that which God the Father had witneſſed before in his life-time by voices from heaven, by ſigns and wonders, and ſuch like things; it pleaſed the ſame Father Almighty to give a more illuſtrious teſtimony to Him, and to the truth of his Doctrine, then ever had been given either in his life or at his death: and that was by

his Reſurrection from the dead. Which is commonly in the Holy Scriptures aſcribed to him, and made his work; (ii. *Act.* 24, 32. i. *Epheſ.* 17, 20. &c.) and evidently proved all that I have ſaid, and more too. For it ſhewed, that as he was not a deceiver of others, ſo he was not deceived himſelf. God hereby bad all the World believe what he had preached; and no longer make any doubt of that which he had teſtified, even by his own BLOUD, to be his heavenly Truth. But of this more in its proper place.

VII. Let us now conſider, that thoſe perſons whom our Saviour bad all men hear, becauſe they were ſent by him, as he was by the Father, have told us, (and the event proved it true,) that this BLOUD was ſhed *to make peace*; as you reade ii. *Eph.* 14, 15. That is, to reconcile *Jews* and Gentiles together, between whom there had been very long differences, ſo that of twain they might become one new Man; and both ſerve him in the ſame Religion, and partake of the ſame privileges. What force there is in this to prove the right we have to *Eterniall Life* you will ſoon ſee, when I have noted,

noted, that the intention of God to bring all the World to ſhare alike in his divine favour and love, which had been ſo much incloſed in the *Jewiſh* Nation, was notably proclaimed by *the rending of the veil of the Temple in twain*, juſt when the veil of our Saviour's fleſh was torn, and he yielded up the ghoſt xxvii. *Matt.* 50,51. This was a plain indication, as *Photius* *, the famous Patriarch of *Conſtantinople*, hath truly obſerved, a *Symbol and Preſignification*, to uſe his words, of the overthrow and deſolation that was coming upon that Temple, and the Worſhip therein celebrated. How could it be otherwiſe conſtrued, when that place wherein their moſt holy rites were performed, and their moſt venerable myſteries kept from the eyes of the vulgar, was now laid open and expoſed εἰς κοινὴν θέαν καὶ βεβήλωσιν, as his words are, to common view and profanation?

* *Epiſt.* CXXV.

This was a preface, as he calls it, to the utter ſubverſion and extinction of the reſt of their Ordinances, and their legall Worſhip. The conſequence of which was, as he likewiſe notes, that the knowledge and ſervice of God according to the Law, which had been ſo long circumſcribed

ſcribed and ſhut up in one city and country, being to be aboliſhed; that worſhip which by the Paſſion of our Saviour was revealed, was to be eſtabliſhed, and ſpred to the uttermoſt parts of the Earth. And therefore the rending of the veil did as good as proclaim to all the world, and cry with a loud voice, ſaying, *Come hither and behold the inviſible things. Come ὡς ἔνδον to the ſight of the divine Myſteries, from whence you have been ſo long excluded. Here is free leave for you all to enter, who have as much right as any to that which before was inacceſſible.*

And ſince this moſt holy place was a type of Heaven, (God commanding *Moſes* to make all things according to the pattern in the Mount,) the ſhutting up of this from the people, and hiding the things contained in it, by a veil drawn before their eyes, was an acknowledgment that by the legall worſhip there was no entrance into the heavens; but the way was unpaſſable by thoſe that ſtuck onely to its rites and ceremonies. And therefore the tearing of this veil by the death of *Chriſt* ſignified as plainly, that the obſtacle was removed; and preached to the world, as with the ſound of a trumpet, that

that every one of us, by his BLOUD, may hope to come thither. For He that emptied himſelf for this very cauſe, as the ſame *Photius* writes, and took upon him our fleſh, and ſuffered all things for our ſake, *Chriſt*, I mean, our God, hath opened a new paſſage into the kingdom of heaven, by his life-giving death. Which both diſſolved that old Religion, (as the very ſame thing you ſee foreſignified,) and introduced ſuch an one as will certainly bring us into the high and holy place, whether *Jeſus* our forerunner is entred for us.

And that this tearing of the veil in ſunder was the effect of our Saviour's paſſion and precious BLOUD-ſhedding, is viſible from the relation which the Evangelicall ſtory makes of this Prodigy. So I call it, becauſe you reade that it was not rent from the *bottom* to the *top*, as it would have been if the Earthquake (as ſome may be prone to ſuſpect) had been the cauſe of it; but *from the top to the bottom.* xxvii. *Matt.* 51. This evidently ſhews, it was an hand from above that made this breach: which following immediately upon our Saviour's giving up the ghoſt, was as ſenſible a token that it depended

depended upon no other cauſe but that. The moſt impious are not able to deviſe any other reaſon of ſo ſtrange an accident. Which could have no naturall cauſe, (as an Earthquake may,) but proceeded from a Θεομηνία (as *Photius* his phraſe is) Divine vengeance, which gave the veil this ſtroke, and cut it quite in two; as an indeleble proof that it was the BLOUD of an innocent perſon which they now had ſhed. And indeed the Earthquake, there mentioned, was ſo far from being the cauſe of this rent, that it followed after it: that Power from on high which firſt ſlit the veil, next of all ſhaking the earth, and cleaving the rocks in ſunder.

To which I think it may be fit to adde, that the *Jews* themſelves tell us, the gates of the Temple uſed, after this, to open of their own accord forty years before its deſtruction *. Which made R. *Jochanan ben Zaccai* cry out, *O Temple, Temple, why doſt thou affright thy ſelf? I know that thou ſhalt be deſtroyed in the end; for Zachariah propheſied of thee, Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy Cedars:* xi. 1. Which new prodigy, confeſſed by many of their Writers, together with

* *Tzemach David ad an.* 3785.

with the extinction of the Lamp that uſed to burn there, was a witneſs that God was going away from that place, and intended no longer to dwell in it; but would ſhew his Glory, which for many years had heretofore filled that houſe, to all the Earth.

Now then, if the Partition-wall was thus broken down through the BLOUD of *Jeſus*, and all laid open and common, that we might enter upon the poſſeſſion of the Divine promiſes as well as others; it is certain, by the Witneſs of this BLOUD, that there is an Heavenly Inheritance for us, for Earthly there is none. Either we muſt obtain *Eternall Life* by him that died for us, or nothing at all. For there is no land of *Canaan*, nor any thing like it, given to us *Gentiles*, who are now called to inherit the promiſes. We have no aſſurance of any worldly purchaces; no portion of money, vine-yards, olive-yards, or other goods of that nature, aſſigned to us, as there was to the ancient *Iſraelites*. But quite contrary, they that enjoyed the very *firſt-fruits* of the Divine Love, were told that every one who would live godly in *Chriſt Jeſus* muſt ſuffer perſecution; and take up their croſs,

and

and forſake all, if they would be his followers. Accordingly we have examples of thoſe who ſold their lands, and when they had done, gave away the price of them: ſo far were they from thinking of any temporall rewards. Undoubtedly then, the Bleſſing which *Jeſus* purchaſed for us by his BLOUD, whereby he laid waſte all former incloſures, can be nothing elſe but great Poſſeſſions in another World; where we have the promiſe of an eternall Inheritance. This we ought to expect with the moſt aſſured confidence: for we cannot make any doubt of it, unleſs we will look upon the BLOUD of *Jeſus* as more ineffectuall then the bloud of bulls and goats, whereby they held the Earthly *Canaan*.

VIII. And now let us once more look upon the BLOUD of *Jeſus*, as the *bloud of a Sacrifice*; whereby all Covenants were anciently ſealed, and without which there could be no entrance, no not for the High-prieſt himſelf, into the Holy place where God dwelt. Thoſe inſpired perſons, whom, as I ſaid before, our Saviour bids all men hear and reverence, frequently call his Death by this name. And common reaſon alſo leads us to have the

the ſame thoughts of it. For if it was not the BLOUD of the moſt precious and acceptable Sacrifice which He offered upon the Croſs, how could it put an end, as it hath done, to all the old Sacrifices, which had ſtood ſo long by God's appointment; and make all the bloud that was afterward offered of no force at all for their preſervation from ruine? That it did ſo, is manifeſt by the experience of near ſixteen hundred years. And the *Hebrew* Writers themſelves confeſs, that the *ſcarlet tongue*, (as they call it) that is, the liſt of that colour and figure, which was hung between the Scape-goat's horns, or, as others will have it, at the door of the Temple, and always uſed to turn white, according to that in *Iſaiah* 1. 18. would never alter for forty years before the deſtruction of the Temple, but ſtill continued red on the great day of Expiation. Which if it be true, (as we have their own faith for it,) was a ſhrewd token, that their moſt excellent Sacrifices were now able to doe them no ſervice; and that their Sins were of ſo deep a dye, having crucified the Prince of life, that nothing in the old Religion could purifie them. In vain did they expect to hear that tongue ſpeaking peace

to

to them, which was wont to publiſh good tidings; for it ſtill lookt as red as bloud, and told them there was no hope for them but in *Jeſus*, who alone could make their crimſon ſins as white as wool.

By his bloudy Death they might ſue out a pardon of thoſe very crimes which they had committed againſt himſelf. For it being a Sacrifice, was for the remiſſion of Sins: or elſe the World had been in a worſe caſe then it was before, now that all other *Bloud* to cleanſe them was quite taken away. And there was no reaſon to doubt but God was perfectly well pleaſed and ſatisfied with this one Sacrifice of his; elſe he would not have raiſed him from the dead, nor admitted him into the heavens, where, as He himſelf hath ſince declared, he appears in the preſence of God, and by virtue of his Sacrifice makes perpetuall interceſſion for us. Now this plainly infers (as hath been ſaid before) the hope of Eternall Life. For if there be *remiſſion of ſins*, then we are reſtored to the ſtate of innocence again. We are put into the ſtate and condition of the ſons of God; and there is nothing to hinder our being re-poſſeſſed of *Paradiſe* and the *Tree of Life*. To which we not being

being reſtored in this World, it remains that we be admitted to it and re-inſtated in it in another.

IX. Unto all which let the conſideration of the time be added when our Saviour ſuffered: for that is not without its inſtruction in this buſineſs, but contributes ſomething to the confirmation of our faith. It was at the Feaſt of unleavened Bread, (as they themſelves cannot deny,) a ſolemn time appointed by God to be obſerved at their departure out of *Egypt*; when they were ranſomed by a mighty hand, and purchaſed to be God's peculiar people, and began their journey towards the Land of *Canaan*, which he had promiſed to their forefathers. At this Feaſt, it is well known, a Lamb, immaculate and pure, was ordered to be ſlain; whoſe bloud was that which ſaved them from the ſtrokes of the Angel of Death, who deſtroyed the *Egyptians*. Now our Lord, the Lamb of God without ſpot and blemiſh, the Lamb of God that takes away the ſins of the world, (as St. *John Baptiſt* teſtified,) being ſlain at this very time, and hanging on the Croſs after the ſame faſhion wherein the Paſchall Lamb was wont to be killed; it

was a Teſtimony clear enough, to thoſe that obſerved and laid things together, that his BLOUD was their ranſome from a greater ſlavery, and was ſhed to deliver them from eternall death and deſtruction; and, after they had travelled a while through the wilderneſs, as I may call it, of this world, and overcome there all difficulties and temptations, would procure their entrance into a better and more glorious Reſt then that wherein they were.

The Holy man who writes the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* proves unanſwerably, (chap. iv.) that the *Reſt* into which *Joſhua* brought the Children of *Iſrael*, was not all that good men expected, and which God intended to beſtow upon them. For if that great Captain had brought them to their finall Reſt, there would not have been mention made by the inſpired Pſalmiſt, many years after their ſettlement in *Canaan*, of *another Reſt*, *which*, as the words there are, *remaineth for the people of God.* Now who can pretend to be the *Captain of their Salvation*, to conduct them thither, but onely our Bleſſed Saviour? whoſe Name is the ſame with that of the ancient *Joſhua*

ſhua or *Jeſus*; who was baptized at that very place where they entred into their Reſt in the promiſed Land; to whom the heavens there opened, and God the Father ſpake by an audible voice, and the Holy Ghoſt fell down in a viſible ſhape; who at laſt, after many promiſes and aſſurances that he would bring them to the heavenly Country, was offered at that very time when their forefathers began their travells to their reſting-place; and hereby ſealed what he had promiſed by his bloud, as God the Father ſealed to it by divers acts of his, that He was a Lamb without ſpot, *an offering and a ſacrifice to him of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour.*

Well might St. *Paul* call him *our Paſſeover* that *is ſacrificed for us.* 1 *Cor.* v. 7. For it is as viſible that he was ſlain for the ſalvation of mankind, as that the *Paſchall Lamb* was ſlain for the preſervation of *Iſrael:* and that as the deſtroying Angel paſſed over thoſe houſes where he found the bloud of that Lamb upon the door-poſts, and ſpared the lives of the inhabitants; ſo all thoſe Souls that are ſprinkled with the bloud of *Jeſus* (*i. e.* believe on him) ſhall be delivered by him from periſhing, and preſerved to

eternall Life. Which Salvation he procured by offering himſelf freely as *our Paſſeover*; that is, for the like end (but as much excelling as Eternall life doth temporary) for which the *Paſchal Lamb* was ſacrificed. And he made his ſacrifice the more remarkable, by offering it at that very time when the other was offered, and when they themſelves expected it. For ſome of the *Jews* ſay expreſly, which adds much weight to this obſervation, that *on the ſame day of the month Niſan Iſrael ſhall be redeemed in the days of the Meſſiah, on which they were redeemed when God wonderfully brought them out of the land of Egypt.*

Vid P. Fagium *in* Xii. *Exod.* 13.

Now our Saviour made good his word, which he had often paſſed, that he would give them his very *fleſh to eat*; whereby they might feaſt with him, as they had done that day on the Paſchal Lamb. He gave them alſo his very *bloud to drink*; which was the price of their redemption, that which ſaved them from the deſtroyer, and overcame thoſe enemies which oppoſed their entrance into the Eternall Reſt. For *his fleſh*, (as he ſpeaks vi. *Joh.* 55.) being offered on the Croſs, *was meat indeed, and his bloud drink indeed.* That

is,

is, the moſt perfect food and excellent nutriment; which hath a power to give (not a temporary, as the *Paſchal Lamb* did, but) an Eternall life, to thoſe that partake of it by a lively faith in him. Some of the *Jews* themſelves thought there was ſome greater Myſtery in the *Paſſeover* then the commemoration of their deliverance out of *Egypt*; and ſay expreſly, that then God communicated his Divinity to men. They are the words of R. *Judah* *, *By the Sacrifice of the Paſſeover God joyns men ſo cloſely to himſelf, that they are one with him, as light is with a candle.* Which had little truth in it, till *Chriſt our PASSEOVER was ſacrificed for us*; when the myſtery was explained, and he invited all men to come and *eat of his fleſh, and drink of his bloud*, and thereby have ſuch a fellowſhip with him in his death, that he might communicate to them his life. For τοῦτ' ἔστι τὸ πιεῖν τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, τῆς Κυριακῆς μεταλαβεῖν ἀφθαρσίας, as *Clemens Alex.* ſpeaks *, *This is to drink the bloud of Jeſus, to partake of the Lord's immortality.*

* *apud* Maſium *in* v. *Joſh.* 10.

* L. 11. *Padag. cap.* 2.

And ſo our Lord explains himſelf, when he adds, in the next words, (ver. 57.)

" *As the living Father* (who, being the " authour of life, can give it again to " the dead,) *hath ſent me, and I live by* " *the Father:* (ſhall riſe again, though " I give my fleſh to be ſlain:) *ſo he that* " *eateth me* (believeth on me though " crucified) *ſhall live by me*; that is, be " raiſed again to life by me, as I by the " Father. For *he gave his fleſh*, (as he " ſays at the beginning of this diſcourſe " ver. 51.) that is, delivered it to be " made a bloudy ſacrifice, *for the life* " *of the world*, *i. e.* that all mankind " might have remiſſion of ſins, and eter- " nall life. Which he will as certainly " give to thoſe who do not refuſe to par- " ticipate of this Sacrifice by believing " in him, as the Father of life raiſed him " from the dead to live for evermore. Theſe words ſeemed *hard* to ſome of his Diſciples, ver. 60. who could not underſtand that there ſhould be ſuch virtue in his fleſh as to give life unto the world. But our Lord tells them, there was no cauſe of being offended at this diſcourſe; for if they would but ſtay a while, they ſhould be convinced that he did not aſcribe too much to it: ver. 62. *What and if ye ſhall ſee the Son of man aſcend up where he was before?* That is,

" What

"What will you ſay, if you behold me "raiſed up from the dead, and aſcend "into heaven, where I was before I took "this fleſh? Will you not then confeſs "that my *Death* (which is meant by his "*giving his fleſh* to them) had an excee- "ding great virtue in it, being ſo accep- "table to God as to be thus highly re- "warded? Will it then ſeem incredible "to you, that I ſhould obtain thereby "a power to raiſe the dead, and to give "eternall Life? This, ſure, will be a "convincing argument that I have not "ſaid too much of my BLOUD, nor "promiſed greater things then it can doe "for you. You will then, if you con- "ſider it, joyn your ſelves heartily to "me, though now you are ready to fly "off; and not think my Croſs ſuch a "ſcandall, that it ſhould hinder you from "being Chriſtians.

X. And that will be one of our next works, in the following Chapter, to ſhew the power of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection to perſwade us, that by his Death He will give life to the world. Let us firſt onely briefly conſider, that there are ſome other Circumſtances, beſides this now mentioned, which declare there was ſomething exceeding

ceeding remarkable in the Sufferings of *Chriſt* on the Croſs, to procure him great glory. For we find that *Nicodemus*, one of their Senatours, who durſt not publickly own our Saviour while he was in great favour with the people, came, now that he was crucified and expoſed to ſcorn, and *brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight*, (xix. *Joh.* 39.) to honour his Corps withall. Which would be a ſtronger argument of the thorough conviction already wrought in his mind, if there be any truth in the conjecture of a learned Man *, that theſe ſpices were intended not to embalm him, but, as the manner was upon great occaſions, to burn at his funerall. Thus far he is certainly in the right, that the honour of having ſweet ſpices burnt at their funerals appertained to no other perſons but onely their *Kings*, (2 *Chron.* xvi. *ult.*) and the Head of all the Doctours, the *Naſi*, as they called him, of their Academies. And he notes likewiſe truly out of *Joſeph ben Gorion*, that when the funerall pomp of *Herod* the Great was carried forth, fifty of his ſervants are ſaid to have ſcattered all the way they went thoſe very things which *Nicodemus* brought, *viz. Myrrh and Aloes*, and all other ſweet ſpices.

* Jac. Alting. *Schiſm. l.* iv. c. 26.

ſpices. But whether we can hence conclude that *Nicodemus* now honoured him by theſe as the *King of Iſrael*, and the *Prince of all the prophets*, I cannot tell; becauſe the Evangeliſt (ver. 40.) ſeems to tell us, that the uſe they made of theſe ſpices was to imbalm his body, which *they wound in linen cloaths, with the ſpices, as the manner of the Jews was to bury.* Yet this we may ſafely conclude, that he would never have put himſelf to ſo great a charge, and laid out ſo much upon his dead body, if he had not ſeen ſomething which convinced him that this was *that King* of *Iſrael*, who would give him a reward, for his love and open confeſſion of him, in his heavenly Kingdome. There was nothing to move him to ſuch an expence, upon ſuch an hated perſon, but onely a perſwaſion that *Jeſus* was what he pretended; and an aſſured hope that by this fleſh, which now lay dead, the World ſhould be reſtored to life.

Yea, ſuch power there was in his Death to affect mens hearts, that not onely the Centurion confeſſed him to be *a righteous man*, but all the people who were come together to that ſight, beholding the things that accompanied his ſufferings, were

were prickt in their conſciences, and *ſmote their breaſts*. xxiii. *Luk.* 47, 48. They could not, that is, but expreſs their ſorrow for this horrid fact of ſhedding his BLOUD, and dread the diſmall conſequences of it. Inſomuch that, though it was forbidden by the Conſtitutions of the *Sanhedrin* to make any lamentations for a malefactour; yet they were not able on this occaſion to forbear it. Their own Writers tell us, that it was a part of the honour they did to a deſerving perſon, when his funerall was carried out, to accompany him with ſighs and groans and tears, and beating themſelves, and ſuch like tokens of their inward grief for his loſs. With which the Holy Scripture agrees, when it names this as part of the Curſe of God upon *Jehojakim*, that none ſhould ſo much as ſigh at his buriall, nor make the uſuall lamentation, ſaying, *Ah my Brother! Ah Lord! or Ah his glory!* xxii. *Jer.* 18. From whence it is likely they paſſed a Decree, that when any perſon ſuffered by a publick ſentence for a crime, none ſhould preſume to grace him with any ceremony, nor uſe the leaſt outward ſign of heavineſs, though in their hearts they might mourn for him. But this Decree and Cuſtome ſettled by the Authority of their ſupreme

Gem. Sanh. c. vi.

ſupreme Court, the eſteem which our Saviour wone to himſelf, even when he hung upon his Croſs, forced the people to break. Their affection to him was ſtronger then all Laws; and they could not contain themſelves when they ſaw what teſtimonies heaven gave of his innocence and vertue; but did him publick honour even at the very place of execution. Though he ſuffered as the higheſt and vileſt offender in the world, yet the honeſt-hearted ſpectatours were not onely inwardly troubled in their breaſts at the ſight, but beat or knockt them alſo; and ſhewed thereby, that they were not afraid to own him as a moſt Excellent perſon, whoſe death they ought to accompany with the bittereſt lamentations.

And ſo much may ſuffice concerning the Teſtimony of his BLOUD; which no man can hear ſpeak a word, but he muſt needs think, that which got him ſuch honour among the people in the midſt of his ſhame and the reproach of the Croſs, obtained a far greater glory for him with God in the heavens, who beſt knew how to value his obedience.

O wor-

Proclus Homil. xi. *O wonderfull Paſſion, the Expiation of the World! O Death, the cauſe of Immortality, and the origin of Life! O deſcent into Hell, the bridge by which thoſe who were dead paſſed into Heaven! O Noon, which hath revoked the Afternoon-ſentence againſt us in Paradiſe! O Croſs, the cure of the fatall Tree! O Nails, which wounded Death, and joyn'd the world to the knowledge of God! Great was the victory which He that was incarnate for us obtained on the day of his paſſion. He grappled with death, when he was dead. Hell and the grave this day ignorantly ſwallowed a deadly morſell. To day death received him dead, who always lives. To day the chains were looſed which the Serpent made in Paradiſe. The Thief this day made a breach on Paradiſe, which had been guarded by the flaming ſword ſome thouſands of years. This day our Lord broke the gates of braſs, and cut the bars of iron in ſunder.*

Which of the great Men, that ancient times boaſt of, are comparable to him? All the juſt fell under the power of death, and none could conquer it. Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob, are all turn'd to duſt and aſhes. The memory of Joſeph, in whom the Jews glory,

lay

lay in his dry bones, which they carried out of Egypt with them. Moſes is extolled by them to the skies, but there is not ſo much as his tomb to be found. Such as theſe, and ſo many, death devoured and ſwallowed them all down. But at laſt it ſwallowed one, and againſt its will vomited up the whole World. Who now triumph over it, and cry with a loud voice, O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

His Paſſion is our impaſſibility: His Death is our immortality: His tears, our joy: His buriall, our reſurrection: His Baptiſm, our purification: His ſtripes, our healing: His chaſtiſement, our peace: His reproach, our glory. How much are we indebted to him, who from firſt to laſt conſulted our happineſs? *For he deſcended, that he might make way for our aſcent. He was born, that he might make us friends with the Unbegotten. He took on him our infirmities, that we might be raiſed in power, and ſay with St. Paul, I can doe all things, through Chriſt which ſtrengthneth me. He took on him a corruptible body, that this corruption might put on incorruption. He put on mortality, that it might be changed into immortall. In fine, He*

S. Athanaſius περὶ ἐνσάρκου λόγου. p. 598.

Id. περὶ πάθους, &c. p. 1002.

He was made Man and died, that we who die as men might be deified, and death might no longer reign over us.

*O bleſſed and life-giving Croſs of our Saviour, which triumphed over death, and deſtroyed him that had the power of it, which is the Devil! O divine Word, and true Wiſedom of the Father! thou haſt overcome the Devill, when he thought he had been a conquerour *. O Lover of men, and gracious Lord! thou haſt both redeemed us that were captives, and freed us, by thy own death, who were ſervants of ſin. O Son of God, the true Peace-maker! thou haſt both given us the adoption of Sons, and reconciled us to thy Father; having deſtroyed the enmity by thy fleſh. O rich Saviour, and true King! who becameſt poor, that we by thy poverty might be made rich; and haſt given to us the Kingdom of heaven. O Creatour and former of all things, the Word of the Father! for thou haſt created us again; we are thy workmanſhip created unto good works. O Light indeed, the brightneſs of the Father! for thou haſt inlightned us that were in darkneſs, and haſt brought us that were blind to ſee the light. O Likeneſs and reall Image of the Father! for thou haſt formed us who were loſt, and*

* Auguſt. de Trinitate, L. 13. c. 15. Cat. ex Athanaſio p. 1022.

again

again reſtored the image of God in us. O God, the Word and Life indeed! for thou haſt quickned us who were dead, and renewed us that were corrupted, and cloathed us with immortality. O thou Power indeed, the arm, the right hand of the Father! for thou haſt both looſed the bands of death, and broken the priſon-doors in pieces.

God forbid that we ſhould glory, ſave in the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. To this let us adhere; let us walk worthy of this. And thus living and believing, we ſhall know alſo his aſſumption into the heavens, and his ſeſſion on the right hand of the Majeſty on high. We ſhall behold the ſubjection of Angels to him, and his coming again with glory. Which Angels have foretold; which Saints ſing of in their hymns; and which when we all ſee, we ſhall rejoyce and be exceeding glad in Chriſt Jeſus. By whom be glory and dominion to the Father, world without end, Amen. Ib. pag. 1028.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Concerning the Teſtimony of the SPIRIT, the Third *Witneſs on Earth.*

THough the Children of *Iſrael* were ſo ſtrangely delivered out of their bondage, being ſaved by the Bloud of the Paſchal Lamb from the deſtroying Angel, and then freed from *Pharaoh*, who thought, it's like, that his bloud muſt next of all pay for the keeping them in *Egypt*: yet ſtill they queſtioned whether they ſhould come into the good Land or no, and were at a ſad plunge when they came to the Red Sea; imagining that they themſelves ſhould be there deſtroyed, and become the next Sacrifice to *Pharaoh*'s cruelty. To confirm them therefore in their belief of God's kind intentions towards them, and perſwade them thoroughly that *Moſes* had not brought them out of *Egypt* to kill them, but to ſave them, He gave him power to doe great wonders at that place, and in

the reſt of their journey; which, added to the Miracles in *Egypt*, were a ſtrong conviction that God was among them, and was conducting them by the hands of his Servant to their long-deſired Reſt. This was the laſt Argument and the moſt conſtant, whereby he demonſtrated the truth and reality of his promiſes of bringing them to the land of *Canaan*. They ſaw *his ſigns and his wonders, his mighty power and ſtretched-out arm, all the great acts of the Lord*; (as they are called xi. *Deut.* 7. which Chapter be pleaſed to reade unto that verſe;) which were eminent tokens that GOD had taken them to be a peculiar, or ſpeciall, people to himſelf, as he frequently ſpeaks, and was able to fulfill his word to their Forefathers, of giving them the Land, wherein they were then ſtrangers, for their inheritance.

Juſt ſuch as this is our caſe, whom He hath called by his Son to *an inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for us.* To obtain an eternall Redemption for us, and deliver us out of the hands of all our enemies, his own moſt precious BLOUD was ſhed, as of *a Lamb without ſpot or blemiſh*.

Where-

Whereby alſo, as you have heard, he teſtified to the World that he was no Deceiver, but came to them from God with the *words of Eternall Life*. Many things concurred to make this BLOUD a *witneſs* of his Truth, and of his power to fulfill his own promiſes. And yet, notwithſtanding, this was the very thing that offended many, and kept them from following him. They could not endure ſo much as to hear him ſpeak of giving them *his fleſh to eat, and his bloud to drink*; though he told them thereby he would *give life to the World*. And therefore to ſtrengthen this Teſtimony of his BLOUD, and to convince them evidently that he was the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſin of the World, and gives life to it, there was another *Witneſs* which attended it, both before his BLOUD was ſhed, and likewiſe afterward; which was the SPIRIT. That is, as I ſhewed in the former Treatiſe on this ſubject, *the power he had to work wonders; and the miraculous power which raiſed him from the dead, and preſented him to God in the heavens*. This was abundantly ſufficient to prevent any offence they might take at *Chriſt* crucified; and to ſettle in their hearts an unmovable be-

lief that he was their mighty Redeemer, who would bring them to the eternal Reſt which he had promiſed. For this is the laſt and greateſt argument which St. *John* here produces, ver. 6. *He came not onely by* WATER, *but by* BLOUD *alſo; and it is the* SPIRIT *that beareth witneſs, for the* SPIRIT *is the Truth.* Or, as *Arias Montanus* tranſlates it, *the* SPIRIT *is* (τὸ μαρτυρῶν) *that Witneſs*, that undoubted teſtimony on which we may certainly rely. For τὸ πνεῦμα *the* SPIRIT which I ſpeak of *is truth*; an infallible Witneſs, which cannot deceive you, that *Jeſus is the Son of God.* And ſo it is likewiſe, that *Eternall Life* is in him; and that we ſhall enjoy it by his means: for this RECORD of God is given to make us as ſure of the one, as we are of the other.

Let us briefly therefore conſider, *firſt*, what his *Miracles* ſay to this; and then, *ſecondly*, what force there is in his *Reſurrection* and *Exaltation* to prove it.

I.

And at our entrance upon the firſt of theſe, let us, before we go any farther, weigh

weigh thoſe words of this Apoſtle St. *John* in his Goſpell, xx. 30, 31. where he tells us that he wrote the *ſigns which Jeſus did* (ſuppoſe after his Reſurrection) *in the preſence of his diſciples*, for this very purpoſe, *that they might believe that he was the Chriſt, the Son of God; and that believing they might have* LIFE *through his Name.* They were wrought by *Him*, and recorded by his *Diſciples*, for theſe two ends: that the World might be convinced He was the great Lord of all; and that they might, by faithfull ſubjection to him, look for *Eternall Life* from his omnipotent love. It was the deſign of all his wonderfull works throughout his whole life, (to which the Apoſtle may have reſpect as well as to thoſe after his Reſurrection,) to perſwade men to believe that he would make his followers ſo happy. For by theſe *he manifeſted forth his glory*, (as I obſerved before of the *beginning of his Miracles* in *Cana* of *Galilee*, ii. *Joh.* 11.) and declared to the world, he could work as great a change upon our mortall bodies as he did then upon the *Water*; making them as much nobler then they are now, as the *Water* excelled it ſelf when it was become *Wine.* They were mighty inſtances of his Power; and

of his Goodneſs too: they made him appear to be the *King of Iſrael*, who was to *deliver* and bring *Salvation* to them; though much greater then they expected.

That our Lord did work Miracles, is a truth which they that crucified him can no more deny, then that he died. The wiſeſt of them could never find any colour to affirm that the Goſpel-ſtory was but a fabulous Legend, which related Wonders that were never done. For if they had been able to ſay this, *Maimonides*, the very beſt of them, would not have been put to ſuch diſtreſs, as to let fall theſe words, which we reade in his Treatiſe of *Kings*: *Do not imagine that the King Meſſiah ſhall have any need to work wonders, or alter the courſe of Nature, or reſtore the dead to life again, with ſuch like things, that fools talk of.* Had he not known as well, that theſe things could not be denied which are related of *Jeſus*, as he did that, their force to prove any thing being granted, they would be an unanſwerable teſtimony to him, he would never have thus ſlighted (as he doth in many other Books) things of this nature; which brought the greateſt reputation to *Moſes* among their anceſtours,

Cap. xi.

ceſtours, and were the cauſe why they believed on him, though he attempted no ſuch wonder as the raiſing dead men to life again. Our Saviour, he was not ignorant, very often appealed to his *works*, as the teſtimony of God to him; and thought it ſufficient to tell *John's* diſciples, when they came to inquire who he was, that *he opened blind mens eyes, cleanſed lepers, and raiſed up the dead*; by which they might anſwer their own queſtion. And therefore ſomething was to be ſaid by this *Jew* to diſparage theſe, upon which he ſaw the credit of our Saviour in great part relied. Now had it not been the readieſt way to deny that there were ſuch Miracles wrought? Nothing but the notoriouſneſs of the facts made him wave that courſe; which drove him upon this wretched ſhift, of denying utterly that Miracles are credible witneſſes to him that works them. By this means he thought to rob our Saviour of the glory they brought him; and was ſo blind as not to ſee that, at the ſame time, he took away from his own Maſter the greateſt ſupport he had of his Authority. And therefore herein he is deſerted by his own Country-men, particularly by *Abarbinel*; who, as I obſerved before,

makes the power of working Miracles one of the principall gifts of the *Meſſiah*. In which our Lord, it is apparent to his very enemies, was ſo eminent, that one cannot imagine why he did not believe on him; unleſs, with the ſpitefull *Phariſees*, he imputed all his Works to the Devill. Which blaſphemy, I have ſhewn in the former Book, is ſo manifeſtly confuted by his holy Doctrine and Life, that they muſt be no leſs fooliſh then malicious who regard it. We ask no more, but to allow ſuch things were done as the Goſpell reports: (which they dare not deny us:) and then their great uncertainty what to ſay againſt them, ſhews how forcible they are to convince all indifferent men that he came from God; whoſe finger they were, pointing them to him as the Perſon whom they ſhould hear and obey.

And that they were a plain demonſtration of his power to give *Eternall Life* to all his followers, will appear from theſe following conſiderations.

I. If they confirmed all his Doctrine to be the Will of God, then we ought to look upon this as firmly eſtabliſht by them;

them; for it was a known part of his Doctrine, that God ſent him to proclaim his purpoſe of giving everlaſting life by him, to all thoſe who ſhould believe on him. vi. *Joh.* 38, 39, 40. iii. 16. There is nothing in this aſſertion needs proof, but that they confirmed his Doctrine, (this being, it is apparent to all, a conſtant part of it;) in which the Blind man thought he could preſently ſatisfy any reaſonable perſon, when he ſaid, *If this man were not of God, he could doe nothing.* ix. *Joh.* 33. That is, no ſuch Miracle as that was, of opening the eyes of one born blind; a thing the world had never heard of, ſince it was firſt created, till that time. He preached nothing but piety and holineſs; He lived as he preached: both his Sermons and his Converſation were above all that ever had been for Sanctity: And his Works being ſo alſo, much beyond the moſt famed Prodigies the world had ever boaſted of; it was an unanſwerable argument that God was in him; who was never known to have let ſuch things be done before, in the compaſs of ſo many Ages; and therefore would not let them now doe their firſt Service to the countenancing of a lie. And therefore to theſe our Lord often refers

refers them, as there was reaſon, for a proof of his Divine Authority. For if a falſe prophet could doe ſuch wonders, how ſhould there be any poſſibility of ever knowing a true? Reade x. *Joh.* 37, 38. xiv. 10. xv. 24.

That which is moſt proper for me to note is, that in that xiv. of St. *John*, when he bids them look upon his *Works*, as the beſt glaſs (that then was) wherein to ſee his Divinity, he was diſcourſing on this very ſubject, that *He was the Life*, ver. 6. and that He was *going to the Father* to live with him, and to *prepare a place for them*, &c. ver. 2, 3. Of this he could not give them a better evidence then the *Wonders* he had wrought, untill his *Reſurrection*. After which indeed (he ſaith ver. 12.) they ſhould *doe greater works then theſe*; which would more plainly tell them that he *was with the Father*. It will not be unprofitable if I open the whole diſcourſe, from verſ. 2. where he tells them, with a ſolemn profeſſion he would not abuſe them, that *in his Father's houſe are many Manſions*; and that he was *going* away indeed from them, but it was in order *to prepare a place for them*. He departed, he would have them believe,

believe, not merely to go to reſt himſelf after all his labours; but to take up lodgings, as one may ſay, for them in that bleſſed Reſt prepared for the people of God. Now the conſequence of this he tells them in the next words, ver. 3. *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my ſelf; that where I am, there ye may be alſo.* He aſſures them, that is, he would not loſe the pains he had taken to procure ſuch a happineſs for them; but ſee them ſafe there, where they ſhould have their ſhare with him in that very bliſs which he was about to receive. *And where I go, ye know, and the way ye know:* ver. 4. As if he ſhould have ſaid, You underſtand well enough what I mean: (for I have often ſpoke of theſe things:) I go to Heaven, to live with God, and to give life to thoſe that believe on me; which that you may not miſs of, I have ſhewn you both by my doctrine and my example the way that leads to it. Alas! replies one of his Apoſtles, who ſeems to be the ſloweſt of all other to apprehend his meaning, or give credit to him, *Lord, we know not whither thou goeſt; and how can we find the way?* ver. 5. No? ſaith our Saviour to him again, that is ſtrange. *I* my ſelf

am

am the Way; from whom you might have learnt how to arrive at this happineſs. And that this is the true way, which I have deſcribed, you need not doubt; for *I am the Truth*; that is, the teacher of truth, who have demonſtrated ſeverall ways, that what I declare is the very mind and will of God. And the ſame arguments which prove me to be the Truth, evidently ſhew alſo that *I am the Life*; who will conduct you to that bliſs unto which I am now going. *And no man cometh to the Father*, (and that Eternall life which is with him,) *but by me*; that is, by believing my words, and following my ſteps: ver. 6. And therefore if you had minded me and my words, (as it follows ver. 7. *If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father* alſo,) you would have known it is my Father's purpoſe to give you Eternall life: And from henceforth ſure you will not doubt of it, now that I have revealed it ſo plainly, that I may ſay *you know him, and have ſeen him.* Upon this Anſwer of our Saviour, another of his Apoſtles wiſht they might but ſee the Father, and that would be *ſufficient*: ver. 8. He deſired, that is, there might be ſome ſuch Divine appearance to them, as there was to *Abra-*

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ham and others of the Patriarchs in old time, and they would trouble him with no farther queſtions about this matter. How? ſaith our Saviour, *have I been ſo long with you, and yet haſt thou not known me, Philip?* that is, underſtood what kind of perſon I am? Doſt thou not ſee that I am the onely-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth? the expreſs image of his perſon, and the brightneſs of his glory? Was there ever ſuch an appearance of God in the world, as thou ſeeſt in me? All the Fathers enjoyed was but a little glimpſe of the Divine glory, in compariſon with that which now ſhines upon you in my face. And therefore why doſt thou ask to ſee the Father, as if there was nothing of him in me? I tell thee, *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* And ſo it follows ver. 10. *Believeſt thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I ſpeak unto you I ſpeak not of my ſelf; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.* The properties of God are known by the works that he doeth; and there are ſuch wonderfull evidences of a Divine power as well as wiſedom in me, that all the Viſions the Prophets had, together with all the Miracles they did, were

were not ſuch a teſtimony of a Divine Preſence with them, as theſe are that the Father dwelleth in me. Therefore *believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me*; ver. 11. (that is, take my word for it, that you See the Father, as you deſire, by ſeeing me;) *or elſe believe me for the very works ſake.* Let theſe, at leaſt, convince you that I am as nearly related to him as I pretend; for they are ſuch as can come from none but from God alone. Σύντομος ἀπόδειξις καὶ ῥᾳδία τῆς τοῦ Πατρὸς φύσεως, ὁ Υἱὸς, as St. *Greg. Nazianzen* ſpeaks; *The Son is a brief and eaſie demonſtration of the Nature of the Father:* who appeared in him, and ſpake by him, and declared both how good and how powerfull he is, not onely by all that our Saviour ſaid, but by the Works that he did. Which were moſt manifeſt tokens that God was in him; and that his words were the words of God; and, conſequently, that in him we have life; and that he went to heaven, as he ſaid, to prepare a place for us; and that he will come again, and receive us unto himſelf, if we walk in that way which he hath chalked out to us by his moſt holy Life.

Orat. xxxvi. *p.* 590.

This

This our Saviour aſſerts alſo in other places, where he alledges his *Works* as an evidence of this very Doctrine. I ſhall mention onely two more, and ſo diſmiſs this Argument. In the v. *Joh.* 28, 29. he tells the obſtinate *Jews*, it was no ſuch marvell that a dead man ſhould be raiſed up by him; if they conſidered, which was far more wonderfull, that he was the Perſon who would one day call all mankind out of their graves, and give unto the good *Everlaſting Life*. For proof of which he puts them in mind preſently after of his *miraculous Works*, (ver. 36.) which teſtified God had ſent him, and would verify all that he ſaid. And thereupon he exhorts them to *ſearch the Scriptures, for in them you think ye have eternall Life; and they are they which teſtify of me. But you will not come to me, that you may have life:* ver. 39, 40. Which was as much as to ſay, You all look for ETERNALL LIFE, and you hope in the Holy Scriptures to find it: I wiſh you would be more diligent in peruſing them; for they ſhew plainly that I am He who muſt bring you to it. But this is the miſery of your condition, that neither my *Works*, (ſpoken of before) nor the *Scriptures*, nor the teſtimony

teſtimony of *John Baptiſt*, (which he firſt alledged ver. 32, &c.) will perſwade you to believe on me; without which I cannot beſtow Life upon you.

The ſame he tells them x. *Joh.* 25. where he ſaith, *The works that I doe in my Father's name, they bear witneſs of me.* They made it ſo apparent, that is, he ought with all readineſs to have been received, that he could not judge, as you reade in the next verſe, their infidelity came from any thing but improbity. Now what it was his works witneſſed, he tells us ver. 27, 28, 29, 30. *viz.* that to his ſheep, who were obedient to him, he would give *Eternall Life:* of which they ſhould have ſuch a ſure poſſeſſion, that they ſhould never loſe it; becauſe none ſhould be able to wreſt them from him, with whom God himſelf had intruſted them; who would maintain and defend them, and their right to it, without any poſſibility of plucking them out of his hands. His Father, he means, had appointed him to beſtow this Life on all his followers, who was able to make good his own purpoſe and promiſes. And therefore as the Works he did made it appear that He and the Father were one; ſo He would

would certainly make good the Doctrine which he preached, (and thus by Miracles confirmed,) that they ſhould *have Eternall Life, and never periſh.*

II. This we may reaſonably think his Miracles declared, if we conſider the nature and quality of every one of them; which, in generall, was the doing of ſome good or other to mankind. What did this ſpeak, but that He was come to be the Authour of the greateſt happineſs to them? They could not well pick leſs ſenſe out of his Works then this, when they ſaw him beſtow ſuch benefits, that He was of GOD, *who is Good, and doeth good*, and would never ceaſe his loving-kindneſs to the World. For the multitude and the conſtancy of his Miraculous acts of bounty, in ſo many places, to all ſorts of men, throughout his whole life, declared the largeneſs, the univerſality, and unchangeable perpetuity of his Goodneſs; which would withhold no good thing from upright perſons. And therefore in his Anſwer to the Queſtion which *John*'s diſciples propoſed, you find his opening the eyes of the blind, cleanſing the lepers, making the lame to walk, and ſuch like miraculous works, in conjunction with

his *preaching the Goſpell to the pooreſt people*; which was nothing elſe but this glad tidings of *Eternall Life*. xi. *Matth.* 5. This he publiſhed ſo plainly as none before him had done; and that they might be diſpoſed to believe him to be the perſon in whom all nations ſhould be bleſſed. He did ſuch Miracles as none before him had done: which were all bleſſings, the greateſt favours and kindneſſes to mankind; but no hurt to any one man in the world. This was a greater Argument to receive him as the Authour of *Eternal Life*, which he promiſed, then the wonders in *Egypt* were to perſwade the *Iſraelites* that *Moſes* ſhould redeem them, and bring them to temporall felicity: inaſmuch as the conſtant doing innumerable benefits to men renders one far more acceptable, then the killing and deſtroying them.

III. But then, if you more particularly conſider, that a great many of his Miracles were the reſtoring men to their primitive ſtate of integrity and ſoundneſs of body, by removing the ſickneſſes and diſeaſes which Sin had brought upon them; it was a notable ſign that He was the Healer of Nature, the Reſtorer of the World,

World, the Σωτηρ Saviour of mankind; who could bring them back to that bleſſed immortality which they had loſt. Whence it was that, when he cured the man ſick of the palſy, in ſtead of ſaying, Be well, he ſaid, *Son, thy ſins are forgiven thee:* to ſhew that He had power to remove the puniſhment of ſin, and ſo make them immortall.

IV. The like another ſort of Miracles ſeems to ſuggeſt to us; which was his feeding ſo many thouſands at a time with a ſmall quantity of proviſions. Of which you reade (as in other places, ſo) in vi. *Joh.* 5, 6, &c. where you find, that with *five barley loaves and two ſmall fiſhes* he entertained about five thouſand people ſo plentifully, that every one of them had as much as he deſired: and when they had done, there were twelve baskets of fragments, which remained over and above to them that had eaten. This Miracle made the multitude conclude that certainly He was *the Prophet* who ſhould come into the world: and therefore they purpoſed, whether he would or no, to come and make him *their King:* ver. 14, 15. And when he avoided it by croſſing the ſea privately, (ver. 16, 17, &c.) they alſo

took ſhipping to follow after him, and never reſted till they had found him: ver. 24, 25. Whereupon our Lord takes occaſion to tell them, how ſorry he was to ſee them ſo induſtriouſly purſue the food of their bodies, and not mind the food of their Souls, to which his late Miracle led them: and in plain terms tell them, that Spirituall food was himſelf; who was the *Bread of life* they ſhould hunger after, more then for the loaves wherewith they had been filled: and that if they did eat of him, they ſhould have *everlaſting life*, *and he would raiſe them up at the laſt day*, ver. 26, 27. and 35, &c. This they might eaſily have believed, if they had conſidered the Miracle of the loaves; which was a token from God that he could ſupport them eternally. For why ſhould not he be able to give life, who ſo ſtrangely preſerved it? and out of a little duſt make a body, as he had out of a few crums made ſo many loaves? If their deſires had been fixed upon this *Eternall Life* which he preached, as much as upon the preſent, they would as naturally have taken this Miracle for *the Seal* whereby God noted him to be the giver of it, as they took it to be a mark that he could thus fill their bellies every day,

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and ſave them the labour of ſeeking food; after the manner that *Moſes* fed their Fathers with Manna in the Wilderneſs.

V. And next to this, if you conſider how he diſpoſſeſſed Devils, which was a Wonder as frequent as any, it told the world plainly that He was come to *deſtroy the works of the Devil*, to overthrow his kingdom, and deveſt him of his power, unleſs they would ſtill uphold him in it. By Sin he held his Throne; this gave him all the power he had over men, and made them his vaſſals and ſlaves. Who being ſo often reſcued out of his hands, and he ſo openly foiled; it was a ſign that *Jeſus* was come to take away the ſins of the world, and thereby diſarm him of the power of death, and reſtore men again to that everlaſting Life, out of which the Devil had before thrown mankind, as our Saviour now threw him out of them. All this the *Jews* themſelves confeſs ſhall be the work of the *Meſſiah*. According to what we reade in the Authour of the Book concerning *the Service of the Sanctuary*, who ſaith, "that the King *Meſſiah* "ſhall reſtore all things to their firſt e-"ſtate, ſo that the intention of God ſhall

" be fulfilled which he had in the Crea-
" tion of the World; for the World ſhall
" return to that naturall perfection which
" it had before rebellious *Adam* ſinned.
" The Prophets are faithfull witneſſes of
" this, as it is written lxv. *Iſa.* 19. *I will*
" *rejoyce in Jeruſalem, and joy in my peo-*
" *ple; and the voice of weeping ſhall be*
" *no more heard in her, nor the voice of*
" *crying.* And ſo he ſpeaks alſo in ano-
" ther place of that Book, xxv. 8. *He*
" *will ſwallow up death in victory, and*
" *the Lord God will wipe away tears from*
" *all faces.* The Authour alſo of *Baal Hat-*
turim, as I find him cited by *Hackſpan* *,
confeſſes as much in his Notes upon xix.
Num. where he ſaith, *In the times of Sal-*
vation (or the days of *Chriſt*) *there ſhall*
be no uſe of the Aſhes of the red heifer, ac-
cording to that, He will ſwallow up death
in victory. Which words are cited by
St. *Paul* 1 *Cor.* xv. 54. (as the other part
of that verſe is by the voice St. *John*
heard from heaven, xxi. *Rev.* 4.) when
he is treating of the Reſurrection of
the dead, as the great comfort of Chri-
ſtian people. Who may well expect it,
and all the bleſſings that attend upon
it, from our Lord *Jeſus*, the true *Meſ-*
ſiah, if to all that hath been ſaid we

* *Cabala Judaica Sect.* 72.

adde

adde the conſideration of what follows;

VI. That he raiſed even dead men to life again: which was the greateſt Miracle of all, and at that time the greateſt witneſs of the SPIRIT to him. This ſhew'd that indeed he had Life in himſelf, and would beſtow it upon us, as I have already noted; for he raiſed them on purpoſe to declare what he was, and what they might expect from him, *viz.* a perfect victory over death and the grave. Which appeared moſt remarkably in the reſurrection of *Lazarus*; who was the moſt famous inſtance of this power reſiding in him. For the Miracle wrought on him was not ſo little as the recovering one who drew his laſt breath, (which was the caſe of the Centurion's Servant;) nor the reſtoring one to life who was newly dead, (as in the caſe of the Ruler of the Synagogue's daughter;) nor the raiſing a young man who was carried out towards his grave, (as the Widow's ſon was:) but πρὸς τὸ ὑπερτέρω ἡ θαυματοποιία προέρχεται, as *Greg. Nyſſen* ſpeaks *, his Wonder-working proceeds to ſomething more ſublime. A man of grown years, not onely dead, but muſty, already putrid, and in a diſſolution, (as he

* *De Hominis opificio cap.* xxv.

describes his condition,) so far gone toward corruption, that his own friends thought it not fit our Lord should go to uncover his tomb, because of the ill smell which might be expected; this man, I say, with one word of our Lord's, was restored again to life, firm and compacted: and though he was bound hand and foot with grave-cloaths, it did not hinder his coming out of his grave; which, as *Theophanes* thinks, was a Miracle little less then his Resurrection. Who can chuse but look on this οἱονεὶ τὰ προτέλεια τῆς καθολικῆς ἀναστάσεως, to use the same St. *Gregory*'s words, as the *beginning* (the *little Mysteries*, as I may call them,) *of the Universall Resurrection*, into which *Christ* now initiated his Disciples? For it is apparent by this, He is the *Lord of Life*, who can raise a putrid rotten carkass, as well as those who are but newly departed the world.

And this was no private business transacted onely between him and his Disciples, but a thing so notorious, that the ὄχλος *the multitude* who were there present *bare record of it.* xii. *Joh.* 17. That is, they affirmed it to be no vain report, but told those of *Jerusalem* (whither our Saviour

Saviour was then going) who had not ſeen the Miracle done, that it was a certain Truth upon their knowledge. Which they might affirm with the greater aſſurance, becauſe, as *Theophanes* * obſerves, they were confirmed in this belief by the teſtimony of all their ſenſes. "By *their* "*own voice*, which ſhewed him the Tomb, "ſaying, *Come and ſee:* and *his* loud "voice, which they *heard* ſaying, *Lazarus, come forth.* xi. *Joh.* 34, 43. By "their *ſight*, when they beheld him, "whom they knew very well to be dead, "obeying his word. By their *ſmell*, when "they perceived the ill ſent, as they rol-"led away the ſtone. By their *touch*, "when they looſed his hands and his "feet, as our Lord bad them, and let "him go. By all theſe they were ſo well ſatisfied, that there was no room left for *their* infidelity; nor much for the *Phariſees:* who knew neither how to confute this Teſtimony, nor how to avoid the conſequence of it. They began now to deſpair of prevailing againſt him any other way, then by taking away his life; which their malice made them deſign againſt the cleareſt light. Though that alſo proved, as you ſhall ſee preſently, but a farther confirmation of the truth they

* *Archiepiſ. Taurom. Hom. xxv.*

they ſought to obſcure, by his riſing again from the dead. And they could have found in their hearts to have killed *Lazarus* too; becauſe, as long as he lived, he would proclaim this Miracle to the honour of *Jeſus*: who hereby gave ſuch an illuſtrious teſtimony that he was the Authour of *Eternall Life*, that juſt when he was going to raiſe up *Lazarus*, he inculcates this Doctrine, as the fitteſt ſeaſon to impreſs it upon them. xi. *Joh.* 25, 26. *I am the Reſurrection and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live. And whoſoever liveth, and believeth in me, ſhall never die.* *Martha*, it ſeems, believed this before, upon a perſwaſion that he was *the Chriſt, the Son of God, that ſhould come into the world*: ver. 27. But when ſhe ſaw *Lazarus* come out of his grave, then ſure ſhe believed it more ſtrongly; both becauſe it was a farther argument that he was the *Chriſt*, and likewiſe included in it that very thing which he propounded to her belief, *viz.* that *He was the Life*, and would *give life* unto thoſe who were dead, if they believed on him.

I ſhall conclude this part of the SPIRIT's Teſtimony with thoſe words of our

our Lord himſelf, viii. *Joh.* 50. where he proteſts that *he ſought not his own glory*; that is, aſſumed not to himſelf this great power, to be the Life of the world: but *God the Father ſought it*; *i. e.* perſwaded the world of it, by the illuſtrious Miracles which he wrought; whereby *the Father honoured him*, (as he ſays ver. 54.) and paſſed ſuch a judgment on him, that we may all conclude, as he doth ver. 51. *Verily, verily, if a man keep his words, he ſhall not ſee death.*

II.

Of which we ſhall be the more confident, if we adde now the other Witneſs of the SPIRIT to him, which was *in raiſing him from the dead, and giving him Glory at God's right hand.* This was a greater Wonder then all that preceded; ſufficient to ſatisfie thoſe who ſtill remained doubtfull. For "if any body (as "St. *Greg. Nyſſen* diſcourſes in the Book "before mentioned) ſhould uſe thoſe "words of our Lord in another caſe, and "apply them to this buſineſs, ſaying, "*Phyſician, cure thy ſelf:* it is but meet "that he who did ſuch wonders on other "mens bodies to prove a Reſurrection,

"ſhould

" ſhould give an example of it in his own.
" We have ſeen one nigh to death, another
" newly dead, a young man ready to be
" laid in his grave, and *Lazarus* already
" rotten; all theſe by his word recalled
" to life: Let us ſee one live again who
" was wounded, and had his heart pier-
" ced, and his bloud ſhed, one who we
" are ſure was dead. Come then, and
" look upon *Jeſus* himſelf; whoſe hands
" and feet were pierced, into whoſe ſide
" a ſpear was thruſt. Come, and look
" upon him who bled to death. And if
this man was raiſed from the dead, (nay more then that, aſcended into heaven,) as abundance of credible witneſſes teſtifie; what doubt is there left, that by him God will give us a bleſſed Reſurrection unto immortall Life, if we be obedient to him? They that ſaw the one (*viz.* his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion) could not but ſtedfaſtly believe the other: and have told us that he was *raiſed* and *glorified* on purpoſe *that our faith and hope might be in God.* 1 *Pet.* 1. 21. This was the great deſign and end of firſt opening his grave, and then opening the heavens to him; that our confidence in God might revive again, and we might hope by his favour to have the honour of being

ing made the ſons of God, by being the children of the Reſurrection.

That our Bleſſed Saviour was really dead, as the Hiſtory teſtifies, his greateſt Enemies always confeſſed, and ſtill acknowledge. He hung a long time upon the Croſs; there he bled; and at laſt his ſide was wounded with a ſpear in the vitall parts. All the ſpectatours were ſatisfied that he had given up the ghoſt: and the Souldiers, when they came to break his legs, as the manner was, found the work already ſo effectually done, that there was no need of it. He was wrapt in Cerecloaths, laid in a grave, and given up by all his Friends for a loſt man. But that after all this he was as really alive again as he had been before, is teſtified by divers ſufficient Witneſſes; and among the reſt by one of his principall Enemies, who was throughly convinced of it. The Apoſtles ſaw him very often; they ſpake with him; they felt and handled him; one of them put his finger into the very print of the nails, and thruſt his hand into his wounded ſide. They eat and drank with him; they received Commiſſions from him: and after he had ſhewn himſelf alive to them by many infallible proofs,

proofs, being ſeen of them forty days, he aſcended up to heaven in their ſight; and from thence, according to his promiſe, they received the Holy Ghoſt; *i. e.* in his Name did all ſorts of Miracles, raiſing even dead men to life again. And after all he appeared from heaven to St. *Paul*, (a man that ſet himſelf vehemently againſt him, and breathed nothing but threatnings and ſlaughters againſt his Diſciples,) whom he turned quite to be on his ſide; perſwading him ſo fully that he was indeed riſen from the dead, that he became, as you have heard, a moſt zealous preacher of it with the continuall hazzard of his life. This is a more credible Hiſtory then any other: (as it were eaſie to ſhew, if it were my preſent buſineſs:) and we may better doubt of all Records, then of thoſe wherein the memory of theſe things is preſerved. They were holy, devout and ſelf-denying perſons, who report theſe things upon their own knowledge. And they are reported not by one or two, but by many of them; who met with nothing in the world to tempt them to tell a lie, but with a great many things to deterr them from publiſhing ſo odious a Truth. And therefore if we will not doubt of every thing we

do

do not ſee, we cannot refuſe to believe that *Jeſus* did indeed riſe again after he was dead and buried, and aſcended into heaven. Which being ſuppoſed, (for I ſhall ſay no more of it here,) there is no man can have the face to deny *the Reſurrection of the body*, and *Life everlaſting*, which *Chriſt* our Lord hath promiſed us. There can be no truer reaſoning then that of St. *Paul*, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 14. *If we believe that Jeſus died and roſe again, even ſo them alſo that ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him.*

I. For thus much is evident at firſt ſight, and is included in the thing it ſelf, that this work of the SPIRIT proves a poſſibility of the Reſurrection of the dead, and ſhews that we mortal creatures, who live on the earth, may live in the heavens. So the ſame Apoſtle argues elſewhere againſt thoſe who denied this Truth. 1 *Cor.* xv. 12. *If Chriſt be preached* (upon ſuch credible teſtimonies as he mentions in the foregoing verſes) *that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you that there is no reſurrection of the dead?* It is the groſſeſt abſurdity, that is, to ſay there can be no ſuch thing as the reſtoring of a dead body to life; when it is

ſo

ſo evidently verified in *Chriſt*'s reſurrection. Which ſhews it is ſo far from being impoſſible or incredible, that it is a thing which hath been done already; as is very well atteſted by Witneſſes that cannot with any equity be rejected. And by the ſame reaſon he proves we ought not to deſpair of ſeeing our bodies made glorious and incorruptible. For if He be not in his grave, (as none could ſhew him there after the third day,) but is made glorious; why may not we partake of the ſame favour, by that power which raiſed *Chriſt* from the dead, and ſet him at God's right hand? There is no reaſon to doubt of it; but the greateſt reaſon to hope and be confident, that *He who raiſed up the Lord Jeſus* (as St. *Paul* ſpeaks in the next Epiſtle, 2 *Cor.* iv. 14.) *will raiſe up us alſo by Jeſus, and ſet us in his preſence* in the heavens.

II. For by his Reſurrection the SPIRIT proved the truth of all that the other Witneſſes, *the Water*, *the Blood*, and his Miraculous *Works* too, teſtified. Particularly it demonſtrated the truth of his *Doctrine*, by which, as you have ſeen, *life and immortality was brought to light.* If this had not been true, that we ſhall

live

live for ever by him, *Jeſus* would have periſhed, and never have come to life again, to deceive the World the ſecond time. But ſeeing God did not leave his Soul in hell, nor ſuffer his *Holy* (*i. e.* his anointed) *one* to ſee corruption; it is an uncontroulable argument that thoſe who believe on him ſhall not periſh neither, but be made alive as he is. Becauſe He that ſaid he would riſe again the *third* day, ſaid likewiſe with the ſame aſſurance, that at the *laſt* day he will raiſe up us alſo, and beſtow upon us everlaſting Life. When God (who alone could doe it) verified the one, and according to his word raiſed up *Jeſus* the third day; He bid us be aſſured of the other, that this *Jeſus* hath Life in himſelf, and will by his power raiſe up us, according to his promiſe, unto a never-dying life.

This is the Character He had given of himſelf, *I am the Reſurrection and the Life*; that is, the Authour, the Cauſe of both: *He that believeth on me ſhall have everlaſting life, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day*; nothing of him ſhall periſh, neither his Soul nor his body; for even *they that are in their graves ſhall hear his voice*, and ſhall riſe again to life. This

he often preached, and proved many ways: but after all he ſealed it with his bloud, and bad them expect a little, and they ſhould ſee it ſealed by his reſurrection from the dead. Which inſuing at the time appointed, was a perfect demonſtration that he ſaid true, when he affirmed that He is the *Reſurrection and the Life*; by whom we ſhall receive this inеſtimable benefit of riſing again after death, to live for ever with him. Of this as well as the former Conſideration I may poſſibly ſay ſo much elſewhere, that I ſhall ſpare any farther pains about them now.

III. Let us rather remember how ſeverall perſons roſe from the dead at that very time when he left his grave: (xxvii. *Matt.* 52, 53.) which were notable inſtances of his power to give life; and put us in hope that we ſhall all riſe again as they did. There is no cauſe but his Reſurrection to be aſſigned of this Miracle, which fell out the ſame time that he was miſſing in his grave; as the opening of their tombs, at that very moment when he died. Never was any ſuch thing heard of before or ſince; and therefore it was intended to demonſtrate the mighty power

er of his Reſurrection: when *many bodies of Saints which ſlept aroſe, and came out of their graves, and went into Jeruſalem, and appeared unto many.* Whoſe teſtimony none have had the confidence to contradict by endeavouring to diſprove it; but the *Jews* rather by ſome conceſſions of theirs confirm us in the belief of it. For it is a common opinion now among their *Doctours*, that *the Kingdom of the Meſſiah ſhall begin with the Reſurrection of the dead.* Bury me, ſaid R. *Jeremiah*, with ſhoes on my feet, and my ſtaff in my hand, and lay me on one ſide; that when *Chriſt* comes, I may be ready. But of this conceit we can find no foot-ſteps in the Old Scriptures; which makes it probable that they have borrowed this, as they have done many other things, from the Holy Goſpell, in which it is recorded, that he began his entrance upon his Kingdome with the Reſurrection of ſome pious perſons, as an earneſt of the reſtoring all the reſt to Eternall Life. And thus it is likely they have learnt to diſcourſe of the bodies of the juſt after they are raiſed; concerning which ſome of them ſpeak ſo ſublimely, above the dull and groſs conceptions of the reſt of their Nation, that one can ſcarce look upon

it otherwiſe then as Chriſtian language. *When the Soul is in the ſtate of glory,* (ſaith the Book *Zohar,*) *it ſuſtains it ſelf with the light above, wherewith it is alſo cloathed: and when it ſhall return to the body, it ſhall come with the ſame light, and with the body ſhall ſhine as with the brightneſs of heaven.* More there is in other Authours to the ſame purpoſe, which ſay, God can give us bodies ſtrong and vigorous *like the Angels*; and that the bodies of the juſt after the reſurrection ſhall be ſubtil *like the globe of the Moon*, and ſo give no impediment to the Soul, in its enjoyment of the Splendour of the Divine Majeſty.

Vid. Jo. de Voyſin *in Pug. fid. part.* iii. *diſt.* 2. *c.* 8.

Vid. eum de Lege Div. in xxii. *Matt.* 30.

But ſuppoſing this to be their own language, without any tincture they had received from the Chriſtian Doctrine, it will be ſtill more remarkable, that our Lord *Jeſus* (according to their expectations from the *Meſſiah*) ſhould begin to raiſe the dead, when he went to take poſſeſſion of his throne. A plain ſign that he is the Reſurrection and the Life; from whom we may confidently look for bodies, not onely bright as the *Moon*, but that ſhall ſhine, according to his faithfull promiſe, *like the Sun*, in the Kingdom of

of the Father. Concerning which things if the Apoſtles had written falſe, and there had not been *many* able to *bear record* of the riſing of theſe *holy perſons*, and coming into *Jeruſalem*, as well as of the riſing of *Lazarus*; there would have been pens enough in thoſe days imployed to confute them, and proclaim the forgery. And theſe *Jews* would have been as carefull preſervers of ſuch confutations, as of any their moſt beloved Traditions; which can never doe them ſo much ſervice, as thoſe volumes would have done.

IV. Nor is there the leaſt ſhadow of reaſon to queſtion the Teſtimony of thoſe who ſaw him *aſcend into heaven*, and, as a token of his being inthroned there, received from him, ten days after, the gift of the Holy Ghoſt. Which compleated the demonſtration of his power and purpoſe to give *Eternall Life* to all his followers. For,

1. His very Aſcenſion into heaven (as it breeds in us a belief of a glorious ſtate in the other World, ſo it) evidently ſhews that it is poſſible ſuch as we may be tranſlated thither: And though our

Bodies now be but lumps of living elay, yet they may one day be ſnatched, as he was, from this dull globe, to ſhine among the Stars. And the Angels alſo appearing both at his reſurrection and aſcenſion, and waiting upon him unto heaven, ſhew that its gates are no longer barred againſt us, but ſet open again to give us a free admiſſion into it. For they who were ſet to watch the way to Paradiſe, and guard it ſo that none ſhould enter, voluntarily lent their aſſiſtence to tranſport Him thither, after they had brought the joyfull news of his being riſen from the dead.

2. But this is the leaſt comfort we receive from thence; for his glorification at God's right hand, when he came thither, advances our hope to a greater height; and ſhews that it is not onely poſſible, but certain, we ſhall be taken up above to be with him. His Kingdom, it is apparent now, (by his ſending the Holy Ghoſt,) is ſupereminent over all; and nothing can be out of the reach of his power. For it is a power over all Creatures *in heaven and earth and under the earth*, who doe obeiſance to him, and cannot reſiſt him. ii. *Phil.* 10. 1 *Pet.* iii. *ult.*

ult. And a power to doe all things: for *God hath put all things under his feet.* 1 *Cor.* xv. 27. A power of conferring all dignities and honours; iii. *Phil.* 21. and of removing all impediments to our preferment, He having the *keys of hell and death.* i. *Rev.* 18. In ſhort, a perfect power to doe all things to make us glorious. *For in that he put all in ſubjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him*, as the Apoſtle argues ii. *Heb.* 8. And though he hath not yet exerciſed his whole unlimited power, as it there follows, yet we are ſure he hath it; becauſe *we ſee* (by manifeſt arguments) *Jeſus crowned with glory and honour for the ſuffering of death.* By which the allwiſe God thought fit to *conſecrate this Captain of Salvation*; who he deſigned ſhould *bring many Sons unto glory* together with himſelf.

3. Which He will not fail to doe, we may be ſure, being thus *perfected* and compleatly furniſhed for the very purpoſe: becauſe this Royall power wherewith he is inveſted is a kind of Truſt; and he hath received it (as St. *Paul* plainly ſuppoſes 1 *Cor.* xv. 24, 25, &c. where he ſpeaks of his Kingdom) not onely for himſelf, but

for the good of all thoſe whom he rules and governs. For the Apoſtle concludes that he, having a Kingdom which muſt at laſt be reſigned into the hands of God the Father, will firſt put down all rule, all authority and power, and leave no enemy unconquered; no not Death, which will onely be the laſt that ſhall be ſubdued, but ſubdued and deſtroyed it muſt be: ver. 26, 27. Nay, our Lord himſelf acknowledges his Kingdome to be a truſt, when he ſays, xvii. *Joh.* 2. *Thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternall life to as many as thou haſt given him.* Whence it is that he often proteſts, *it is his Father's will, that of all he hath given him he ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt day*, &c. vi. *Joh.* 39, 40. *For as the living Father hath ſent me, and I live by the Father; ſo he that eateth me, even he ſhall live by me:* ver. 57. And in expreſs terms he ſaith, as I have ſhewn before, that he went away *to prepare a place for us.* And therefore is bound by his office, we may conclude, to promote us to that glory and honour in the heavens, which it is his Father's will, he knows, ſhould be beſtowed on us.

4. And

4. And who can doubt at all of his fidelity in this, who was ſo faithfull in all other things; moſt punctually, for inſtance, making good his promiſe of ſending the Holy Ghoſt, as an earneſt, I have often ſaid, of this immortall inheritance? None can imagine he will now prove negligent in that, which by his place he ſtands ingaged to perform; when upon Earth he did the will of him that ſent him with ſuch exactneſs, that he rewarded him for it with that high dignity which he now enjoys in the heavens. Therefore his greateſt care was to aſſert and prove his *power* to give *Eternall Life*. Of his *will* he thought there need not much be ſaid; for none could doubt of it, after they ſaw him die for them, and then expreſs ſuch love, after his reſurrection, as to ſend the Holy Ghoſt upon them.

5. This is abundantly ſufficient to ſecure all conſidering perſons of ſo deſirable a Good. Which the Apoſtles began confidently to expect, as ſoon as ever they were ſatisfied of the reſurrection of our Lord from the dead. Before he aſcended to heaven their thoughts ran thither,

thither, and they began to ſee that he was the Lord of life and glory. For as ſoon as St. *Thomas* was convinced by a palpable demonſtration that he was riſen, he cried out, *My Lord, and my God.* xx. *Joh.* 28. This is the firſt time that any of his Apoſtles gave him the title of *their GOD*; when they were fully ſatisfied, as *Grotius* obſerves, by his Reſurrection, that he would give Eternall Life to them. And then it was alſo, you may note, that he firſt gave them the title of *his Brethren*, who ſhould ſhare with him in the glory to which he was going. xx. *Joh.* 17. xxviii. *Matth.* 10. *Go tell my Brethren that they go into Galilee*, &c. In which words he alludes, as *Euſebius* obſerves, to thoſe xxii. *Pſal.* 22. *I will declare thy name unto my brethren.* He never called them ſo before, till he was after a new manner *declared the Son of God with power by the reſurrection from the dead:* And now to own them for his *Brethren*, was as much as to ſay, that they ſhould be made the *Sons of God* by their reſurrection, and be *coheirs* with him. To prove which new Brotherhood the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* brings that place of the Pſalmiſt now mentioned, ii. *Heb.* 11, 12. *He is not aſhamed to call them*

them Brethren, ſaying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren. Whence he is called the *firſt-born among many brethren*, viii. *Rom.* 29. Whom he bids them that firſt ſaw him alive again inform, that he aſcended *to his God and to their God, and to his Father and their Father:* to ſhew them, that they might ſafely repoſe ſuch a confidence in God as he had done; and hope to be raiſed by him from the dead, as he was, and receive a *portion* with him in the heavenly inheritance.

6. This Relation which he owns to us gives us the greateſt confidence to look upon him as *our HOPE*, (as St. *Paul* ſpeaks 1 *Tim.* i. 1.) *the HOPE of Glory*, 1 *Col.* 27. For it is certain that when any perſon is advanced to a throne, his bloud is thereby inriched: all his family, I mean, are raiſed and dignified; his children eſpecially put into the quality of royall perſons, though never ſo mean before; nay, made capable of ſucceeding him in his ſtate and greatneſs. Now our Lord hath a family as well as other perſons; all thoſe who believe on him being acknowledged by him, not onely to be his *brethren*, but his *children:* who, living by his faith, are really deſcended from

from him; and therefore *by his reſurrection are alſo begotten again unto a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance.* 1 *Pet.* i. 3, 4. Whence the ſame Divine Writer, who obſerves how he calls them Brethren, immediately ſhews how he owns a nearer relation to them, ſaying, *Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me:* ii. *Heb.* 13. who in him are all advanced to the higheſt honour. His glory makes them illuſtrious: for *if children*, ſaith St. *Paul, then heirs; heirs of God, and joynt-heirs with Chriſt.* viii. *Rom.* 17.

Who is not to be conſidered merely as a ſingle perſon, but as the Lord and Head of a Body or Corporation of men; who are ſo one with him, that the raiſing him to ſo great a glory as he inherits, is the raiſing and ennobling them. A ſure pledge, that is, that the ſame ſhall be done for the *Members*, which was for the *Head*; who will not be without them, but make them partakers of the ſame benefit which is beſtowed on him. He is like the *firſt-fruits*, as St. *Paul* diſcourſes, (in his Chapter of the Reſurrection, 1 *Cor.* xv. 20, &c.) a *ſecond Adam*, the head and beginning of a new Creation; by whom all ſhall as ſurely be made

made alive, as in the *firſt Adam* all died.

7. Why ſhould we doubt of it, ſince he was carried to heaven, as they that received the Holy Ghoſt teſtified, *to appear before God with his bloud for us?* ix. *Heb.* 23, 24. This is a very great argument that we have *Eternall Life*, and that it is *in him*; for this Sacrifice of himſelf being accepted by God, (the *Eternall* SPIRIT, which offered him to God, preſenting him before him without ſpot or blemiſh,) muſt needs take away ſin, and remove all hindrances to our admiſſion into the very ſame place where he is, as that Epiſtle proves at large. *By this offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*; *and we have* παῤῥησίαν, *liberty and freedom* (without any lett or impediment) *to enter into the Holieſt by the bloud of Jeſus.* x. *Heb.* 14, 19. Who is ſuch an High-prieſt over the family of God as is *ſet on the right hand of the throne of the majeſty in the heavens*; (viii. 1.) *and being conſecrated for evermore, is become the Authour of eternall Salvation unto all them that obey him.* v. 9. vii. 28.

8. To

8. To whom therefore we ought to draw near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, that he will not fail to imploy his power to make us happy with himſelf. Which, you may conſider once more, he moſt earneſtly prayed for when he was on earth: it being one of his laſt requeſts to his Father, that *thoſe whom he had given him, might be with him where he is; that they might behold the glory which he hath given him.* xvii. *Joh.* 24. And therefore having obtained ſuch a power over all as hath been deſcribed, by his precious bloud which he was then going to offer; we may reſt aſſured he will not let us be without that of which he was ſo deſirous before he left the World, now that he is in heaven with full power to fulfill his own deſires. For it is unreaſonable to ſuppoſe that a Friend, who earneſtly beſeeches another to grant us a favour, will not moſt readily doe it himſelf, when he becomes as able to beſtow it as he of whom before he askt it.

But the fear of ſwelling this Treatiſe into over-great a bulk makes me paſs over theſe things with the bare mention of

of them, and omit many other. I ſhall put an end therefore to this laſt Teſtimony of the SPIRIT with thoſe remarkable words of St. *Peter*, in his *ſecond* Epiſtle, ver. 3, 4. of the *firſt* Chapter: Where he ſaith, as we tranſlate him, that *the Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godlineſs, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and vertue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes*, &c. The meaning of which in a larger form of words is plainly this. "Account that *grace and peace* which I "have wiſht you in abundance (ver. 2.) "from God and our Saviour, no ſmall "bleſſing: For God hath in a moſt ex"cellent, omnipotent manner beſtowed "on us all things that are neceſſary for "our future happineſs and felicity, and "for our preſent conduct in piety, which "is the onely way to that Eternall life. "And if you ask me how he hath given "us theſe things in ſo reſplendent, god"like a manner; I'le tell you: it is "*through the knowledge of him that hath* "*called us*; that is, through *Jeſus Chriſt*, "the true *Word* of God, who hath cal"led us to piety and happineſs. And "if you enquire again, how you ſhall

"know

" know that what he ſaith is true, and " that he calls us not merely from himſelf, " but from God, who directs us by him " in the right way of *godlineſs*, which " will bring us to everlaſting *Life*; I'll " reſolve you in that alſo: for he hath cal- " led us διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀρετῆς, *by* (ſo it is " in the margin) *glory and vertue*. How we come to render it *to* glory and vertue, I know not, for it makes the ſenſe obſcure; whereas otherwiſe it is perſpicuous and clear: and as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, " The *Glory* and *Vertue* which ac- " companied his preaching, or preſently " followed it, is a very ſtrong argument " to induce you to believe that he taught " the way of God in truth; having re- " vealed all things pertaining to life and " godlineſs, as God himſelf atteſts? For by the *Glory* wherewith he called us, *i. e.* preached the Goſpell and perſwaded us to believe, we are to underſtand his *Transfiguration* on the holy Mount; where *they ſaw his glory:* ix. *Luk.* 32. and to which the Apoſtle afterward appeals ver. 16, 17. of this Chapter, as a juſtification of the truth of their Miniſtry. The coming down alſo of the Holy Ghoſt at his Baptiſm, the voices from heaven, (in one of which God ſaid he would *glo-*

rifie

riſe him again as he had done already,) and the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon the Apoſtles, are here alſo to be underſtood by *Glory:* for *by theſe* we are called and moved to receive the knowledge of him. And then by *Vertue* is undoubtedly meant that very thing which I laſt treated of, *his* mighty power in miraculous works, and the mighty power of the SPIRIT in raiſing him from the dead. For it is well obſerved by *Druſius* and others, that ἀρετὴ *Vertue* in theſe holy Writings never ſignifies, as it doth in heathen Authours, Piety and morall goodneſs in oppoſition to *Vice*; but *power* and might in oppoſition to *weakneſs*. And therefore by this word the *Greek* Interpreters of the Old Teſtament render the *Hebrew* word הוד, which denotes the Greatneſs, Majeſty and height of God's excellency; and ſometimes the word עז, which ſignifies *ſtrength* and *ſtoutneſs*. According to which in the New Teſtament it denotes either the mighty power of God, (as here in this place;) or elſe our courage and valour, as in the fifth verſe of this Chapter. But it is no-where found in the ſacred ſtyle uſed for *piety:* and therefore we muſt not render the particle διὰ *to*,

but *by*, vertue; that is, the power and mightineſs of God's arm or ſtrength, (as the Scripture ſpeaks) by which our Saviour convinced the World that God the Father had ſent him to give Life unto it.

Thus the Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſaith, (which will very much explain this,) that He *was raiſed up from the dead* διὰ τῆς δόξης τοῦ Πατρὸς, *by the glory of the Father.* vi. *Rom.* 4. That is, by his glorious power, as *Camero* well renders it: for his power appeared moſt gloriouſly in that wonderfull Work, whereby, as St. *Peter* here ſpeaks, he called us to believe on him. So we are to underſtand him, it appears by another Argument. For if we ſhould ſay we are called *to glory*, (underſtanding thereby heaven,) we could not be ſaid to have *precious promiſes* (as it follows) *hereby given to us:* For this would be to ſay, that by calling us to heaven he hath called us to heaven. But if we take theſe words the other way, then the ſenſe runs currently, and delivers to us this excellent Truth; "That by ſuch "means as I have treated of, (the Deſcent "of the Holy Ghoſt, the Transfiguration "of our Saviour, the Voices from heaven, "the Miracles he wrought, the might of "his

" his power which wrought in him when " God raiſed him from the dead,) he per- " ſwaded men to receive him as the one- " ly-begotten of the Father; who was " come, by his authority, to ſhew them " the true way to everlaſting life. By " theſe we know that we are not cheated, " but that he who hath called us is the " Son of God; by whom we are ſure to " attain everlaſting life, if we follow thoſe " directions he hath given us, which will " infallibly bring us to it.

And then the next words (ver. 4.) are ſtill more pertinent to my purpoſe, δι' ὧν *whereby*, or *by which*, (GLORY and VERTUE) *are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes.* " We are ſo " ſure to attain eternall life, that we have " many promiſes of it; which are ſo " ſtrongly confirmed, that we cannot " doubt of them, being delivered in ſuch " a divine manner. For when he gave " them it was διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀρετῆς, *by glory* " *and vertue*, with ſuch demonſtrations of " his Authority to promiſe them, and of his " power to make them good, that we can- " not but depend upon his word. None, I ſuppoſe, queſtion but by theſe *great*, theſe *precious*, yea *exceeding great and precious*

promiſes, he means thoſe of raiſing us from the dead, and carrying us to heaven, to live with God, and that eternally. Theſe are the chiefeſt things of which our Lord hath given us ſuch aſſurance, when he called us to believe on his Name. Things which as much exceed all that was promiſed *Iſrael*, as the heavens are wider then the ſmalleſt ſpot of this earth. More precious are they then all lands, if they flowed with milk and honey: more to be deſired then gold, yea then much fine gold, then all the gold of *Ophir*: more to be valued then the Crowns of Kings, which are not ſo much as an Emmet's Egge in compariſon with this Happineſs. Now as there is nothing that can be compared with theſe promiſes; ſo we have no teſtimony on Earth comparable to this of the SPIRIT, that exceeding greatneſs of his power, whereby theſe promiſes were brought to us, and aſſured to be infallible. For by this we know that He hath all power in heaven and earth, and is able to doe whatſoever the Father Almighty doeth; that is, give life to the dead, which is the property of the Almighty alone. So the Enemies of our Religion are forced to confeſs, who ſay there are *three* keys which God keeps to himſelf,

himſelf, and commits to none of his Embaſſadours, *the keys of the womb, the keys of heaven, and the keys of the grave. Thy power,* ſaith *Joſeph Albo* ſpeaking of God, *is not the power of fleſh and blond; for the power of fleſh and blond is to put thoſe to death who are alive, but thy power is to raiſe thoſe to life who are dead.* The very ſame we may juſtly ſay of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, who challenges this power to himſelf, as I have noted before out of the *firſt* of the *Revelation*, where he tells St. *John, I have the keys of hell and of death*, ver. 18. He was no ordinary Embaſſadour, but can doe more then any whom God ſent into the world ever did or could. He can raiſe even the dead bodies of his ſubjects to life again. And when he hath *lifted them out of the duſt*, (if I may apply the Pſalmiſt's words to this purpoſe,) can *ſet them with Princes*; even with the Princes of his heavenly Court, to praiſe and bleſs his love among thoſe great Miniſters, the Angelicall powers, for ever and ever. Which is a power he doth not aſſume to himſelf vainly, but was conferred on him by God the Father; who *raiſed him from the dead, and gave him glory:* wherein St. *John* beheld him

when he ſaid, *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I live for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

Great is thy Majeſty, O thou moſt mighty *Jeſus!* whoſe power is not the power of fleſh and bloud, but the power of God, who raiſes thoſe to life who are dead. Great was the joy which filled thy Diſciples hearts when they firſt ſaw thee alive from the dead, and called thee *their God. None can underſtand the beauty of that ſight. O the brightneſs of that appearing! What a light diffuſed it ſelf then through the whole Creation? What a fragrant ſmell did the very earthquake breath forth, when like a publick crier it proclaimed the Reſurrection? What was the ſavour of the ointment which was then poured out? How was the whole world then transformed and made new? The Angels themſelves leaped for joy to ſee it. How ſweet was the ſound then of their doxologies? With what divine ſplendours were they then adorned? How beautifull did thoſe preachers of thy reſurrection appear? and how great was the glory and the happineſs which they came then to proclaim? O*

Georg. Nicomed. *Serm.* ix.

thoſe

those Words of theirs, which brought us the news of victory over the Enemy! which proclaimed the destruction of Death; and published thee to the World, the Resurrection and the Life!

O that sweet and above all things desirable voice of thine, which, by the women that were carrying spices to thy grave, sounded joy to the World! The Heavens then opened their gates, and received the glad tidings which were brought to us, as if they had been their own. The Intellectuall powers rejoyced, and took a pleasure in our happiness. The Spirituall as well as Sensible World was inlightned. The clouds of sadness were dispelled, from one end of the world to the other; and the rays of joy possessed all. Guilty Nature put off the robes of heavines, and was cloathed with garments of light. The hand-writing of the Curse was torn in pieces, and promises of Blessing were sealed in the room thereof. By that new Salutation, when thou saidst ALL HAIL, the world was filled with the sweetest and everlasting joy.

For thou art the Preacher, and the Cause, and the very Exultation of all joy;

the Authour of good things; the giver of pleaſure; the joy which can never be taken away; the ſweet light; the ſpectacle above all others deſirable; the intellectuall tranquillity and peace; Wiſedom it ſelf, and Power; Incorruption and Eternity; Security and Delight; the onely unchangeable and inconceivable Beauty; Sanctity it ſelf, and Honour and Righteouſneſs, and Glory above meaſure glorious. O how many Names would my Mind bring forth to expreſs thine unutterable excellency! It is onely my weakneſs that hinders, and want of words. But thou who art the infinite, not to be named Good, far above all the titles that Mind can invent; who regardeſt not words, but rather an inflamed heart; who thy ſelf broughteſt the joyfull news of thy Reſurrection; ſhine now into our Minds by the bright beams of thy appearing. Let us ſee intellectually the ſuperexcellent beauty of the intellectuall Sun. Let us inwardly injoy the incomparable ſight of our Lord and Maſter. Let us hear his divine voice ſpeaking ſome ſweet and joyfull word to us. O thou gracious Lord, come; and draw us from theſe preſent things, as out of the loweſt deeps; and leading us ſtraight to that never-decaying life, number us among the quires of

thoſe

those that keep perpetuall festivals above. For thou art both light and life, and resurrection, and the joy of those that triumph in the heavens. To thee it becomes us to give, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, glory, honour and adoration, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

CHAP.

Chap. XII.

Concerning the Teſtimony of the Holy APOSTLES of our Lord.

THere is nothing now wanting to compleat this Diſcourſe, unleſs it be to ſhew that, if the Teſtimony of the APOSTLES of our Lord be at all intended, when St. *John* ſaith, *He CAME by Water and Blood and the Spirit*, (as in the former Treatiſe I proved we have reaſon to think it is,) they alſo bear Witneſs to this Truth; and by them God hath given us this *Record*, that *we have Eternall Life*, and that *this Life is in his Son.*

That *Jeſus* had Diſciples the *Talmudiſts* themſelves confeſs: who tell us in the ſame place where they ſpeak of his being hanged on the evening of the Paſſe-over, that they were *five*; MATTHAI, NETZER, NEKAI, BUNI, and THODA. They do not love to ſpeak the truth, but *Talmud Bab. Tit. Sanhed. c. vi.*

but to the *Four* Evangeliſts (to which perhaps they have reſpect) they have added one more: and report not one of their names aright, except the firſt; and in the laſt have a little varied from the Name of *Judas* the Brother of St. *James*. But thus much we gain from their own Records, that known Diſciples our Saviour had; who profeſſed to believe on him, and owned him for their Lord and Maſter. Theſe perſons, we can make no queſtion, would be carefull to communicate to the World what they had received from him; becauſe they lookt upon him as the Son of God, and eſtemed his words as ſo many Oracles, which his Crucifixion could not diſparage. Accordingly there are Books that paſs under their Names, beſides the four Goſpels; which no man ever laid any claim to, or pretended to be the Authour of, but onely themſelves: and therefore we have no cauſe to think they were not of their inditing.

Now if you examine them, you will find that, after his Aſcenſion to heaven, and the coming of the Holy Ghoſt, their buſineſs was to go about and preach this *Truth*, and the *certainty* of it, to all the World,

World, as their Lord and Maſter had delivered it to them. They were ſo fully perſwaded of it, that they could not forbear to publiſh ſuch glad tidings of great joy to the whole Earth. It was the very end of their Apoſtleſhip, and that which moved them to undertake ſo great a task; as St. *Paul* tells us, when he calls himſelf an *Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt by the will of God, according to the promiſe of Life, which is in Chriſt Jeſus*: 2 *Tim.* i. 1. appointed by God, that is, to publiſh the promiſe of Eternall Life which he had received from *Chriſt Jeſus*; who would certainly give it to all that believed on him. And it is the very Character which the other great Apoſtle gives of himſelf, 1 *Pet.* v. 1. that he was *a Partaker of the glory that ſhall be revealed.* This incouraged him to be a *Witneſs of the ſufferings of Chriſt*, as he ſaith juſt before, and not to be daunted, as he had been, though he followed him to a croſs; becauſe now he clearly ſaw he had a right as a Friend of his (ſo the word κοινωνὸς ſignifies *Philem.* 17 *.) to a ſhare in that unſeen glory where He was, which ſhould one day be revealed.

* *Vid.* Scipion. Gentil. *ibid.*

In

In this they deſired that all mankind might have a portion with them, (1 *Joh.* i. 3.) by becoming Members of their Society. And therefore it was the conſtant ſtrain of all their Sermons, to invite them to it, by ſhewing that *Jeſus* will reward well-doers with the Crown of Life; and be ſo far from letting their labour be in vain, that he will doe for them as his Father hath done for him, *viz.* bring them into his own joy. So St. *John* writes in the very beginning of his Goſpel, i. 4. that *in him was life, and the life was the light of men.* He brought the promiſe of Eternall Life, that is, to mankind, and can himſelf beſtow it; which is the beſt news, the greateſt cordiall, that can be thought of, to revive our ſpirits: like the honey on the top of *Jonathan's* rod, inlightning our eyes, and making us live moſt chearfully and happily, if we believe it, and prepare our ſelves for it. This they laid as the very ground and foundation of all Chriſtian piety; unto which St. *Paul* ſaith it was his office to call men, *in hope of eternall life,* (i. *Tit.* 1, 2, &c.) which God, that cannot lie, promiſed of old, but did not manifeſt till the preaching of the Goſpell, which was com-

committed to him by the commandment of God our Saviour: who authorized him to open this Doctrine more fully, then it had been even by our Lord himſelf while he was on Earth. For St. *Paul* ſhews that, *at the laſt day*, ſo often mentioned by our Lord, he himſelf will appear again in perſon, after a viſible and glorious manner, to conſummate all the faithfull; whoſe happineſs begins as ſoon as they depart this life. Theſe *two* weighty Truths are notably aſſerted by this Apoſtle.

I. Who declares by the *Word of the Lord* (that is, a ſpeciall revelation from our Saviour) the manner of his coming again from heaven, with the attendance of his Angels, to raiſe the dead, and to lift them up to himſelf, and give them the Crown of righteouſneſs; which till that time ſhall not be beſtowed. Reade 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 15, 16, &c. 2 *Tim.* iv. 8. where the ſplendour of that great day, when he will openly appear as the Lord of all, is deſcribed no leſs lovely then magnificently; as I hope to ſhew in another place. It is *the day of rejoycing*, ii. *Phil.* 16. becauſe he will then moſt eminently appear as *our life*; iii. *Col.* 4. as *our Salvation*; 1 *Cor.* v. 5. ix. *Heb.* 28. *to the praiſe and honour*

honour and glory of our fidelity. 1 *Pet.* i. 7. And therefore for this time Chriſtians are ſaid to *wait* and *look*, 1 *Cor.* i. 7. ii. *Tit.* 13. as the time that will compleat their felicity; which till then, the Apoſtles plainly ſuppoſe, wants its Crown and perfection. And ſo the Church hath from the beginning underſtood them. Who deſcribe Souls departed as in a ſtate of *Expectants*, waiting for the appearing of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt:* who will come out of his moſt holy Temple to perfect thoſe who now ſtand, as they ſpeak, ἐν πεϱιβόλοις, in the porch or entry of it; *in atriis*, as the Latin phraſe is, in the outward Court of the Temple or holy place of God. For as the Children of *Iſrael* ſtood in the outward Court, (which yet was a part of the ἱεϱὸν or Temple, as we render it,) expecting the Prieſt every day to come out of the Sanctuary, and the High-prieſt on the day of expiation to come out of the Holy of holies, to give them the bleſſing: In ſuch manner do the Ancients deſcribe the now bleſſed waiting and looking without (though in Heaven, of which the Sanctuary was a figure,) for *that bleſſed hope* of our Lord's coming out of his Moſt holy place, where he now is, without ſin unto their Salvation.

vation. And thus the beſt of the *Jews* expreſs their happineſs, ſaying that pious Souls are in *the bundle of life*, (as the moſt learned Dr. *Pocock* ſhews out of *Judah Zabara*, *) in the *high place*, in the *treaſury*; where they enjoy the *ſplendour of the Divine Majeſty*, being *hidden under the throne of glory*. Which phraſes ſignify a ſtate of imperfection, in compariſon with that which our Lord *Chriſt* (with whom, ſaith the Apoſtle, *our life is hid*, and kept in ſafe cuſtody,) will bring us unto at the day of his appearing.

* *Not. miſcell. cap. vii. p.* 176.

II. But all this time they do not imagine that their Souls lie aſleep, without any ſenſe of joy and pleaſure; no more then the *Iſraelites* did, who were at their Prayers all the time that the Prieſt was in the Sanctuary, deſiring God to accept his interceſſion for them. For what good doth it doe them to be *in the Garden of Eden* or pleaſure, (as the *Jews* alſo call the place where they live,) if they have no taſte of its fruits and happy enjoyments? They would be as well any-where elſe as in the *Boſome of Abraham*, (by which the ſame *Jews* *, as well as our Saviour, deſcribe this ſtate,) if they do not feaſt there, as that expreſſion properly ſignifies; and

* *Vid.* Vcy-ſin *de jud. bil. L.* i. *c.* 10.

as the Parable of *Lazarus* supposes he did, when it saith, that *now he was comforted*, or enjoyed *his good things*, which made a recompence for all the evill he had here suffered.

Orat. x. p. 173. The sense of the Christian Church in this matter is admirably expressed by St. *Greg. Nazianzen.* Who comforting himself and others for the losse of his Brother *Cæsarius*, concludes with these words: *I am perswaded by the words of the Wise, that every Soul that is good, and beloved of God, when it is loosed from this body to which it is tied, straightway* θαυμασίαν τινὰ ἡδονὴν ἥδεται καὶ ἀγάλλεται, *conceives a certain wonderfull pleasure and rejoyces exceedingly, in the sense and contemplation of the good it expects. Which makes it go most chearfully to its Master; because, being got out of its prison, and having shaken off its fetters, which pinion'd the wing of the mind,* οἷς ἤδη τῇ φαντασίᾳ χαίρεται τὴν ἀποκειμένην μακαριότητα, *it already injoys, as it were, an image of the Blessedness laid up for it. And not long after receiving, out of the earth from whence it came, and where it is deposited, its nearly-allied body, (in such a way as God, who tied them together and dissolved them,*

them, knows,) it ſhall together with it inherit the glory there.

And thus St. *Paul* alſo plainly teaches us;

1. When he relates how he was tranſported into the *third heaven* and into *Paradiſe*; and for any thing he knew, out of his Body. 2 *Cor.* xii. 2, 3. Which evidently ſhews he believed, that Souls could act without their bodies, and that they ſhall enjoy God, and have a ſenſe of heavenly things, as ſoon as they depart this life. And ſo much the *Jews* themſelves well conclude from the *Spirit of Prophecy*; whereby holy men of God were ſeparated for a time from their bodies, ſo as to perceive nothing either by their ſenſes or their minds, but onely what God preſented to them. The phantaſms, indeed, which they had received from this ſenſible world, were commonly uſed to repreſent thoſe things which were then offered to them by Divine Revelation: but without any aſſiſtence of the motions of the body, which lay then as if it was dead; while the Soul enjoyed converſe and familiar diſcourſe with God. In which condition, it is manifeſt, St. *Paul's* mind was ſo intent to what was communi-

cated unto him, that he did not at all obſerve whether he had a body about him or no. But there is more then this, if you mark it, in St. *Paul*'s tranſport into Paradiſe; where God ſpoke to him ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, myſteries which he could not declare by any words, becauſe no phantaſms or images of things he had ſeen or heard here in this world could expreſs them. Which is a ſign he conceived them without any motion of his brain, merely by his Spirit.

Of ſuch tranſports the *Hebrews* themſelves talk, who ſay *four* men entred into Paradiſe*: (that is, by the ſpirit of prophecy:) *one* of them was too curious, and died preſently; *another* proved diſtracted after it; a *third* pluckt up the roots, or denied the foundation of Religion, ſaying, אני הנעתי I have already touched the mark, I am come to perfection, and therefore need not mind the work of the Law any longer; a *fourth* entred in peace, and came out again in peace. Which I recite not as a truth; (for all theſe ſtories are told of men who lived ſince the ſpirit of prophecy left them;) but to ſhew that they think it not impoſſible for men to be tranſported

* *Sepher Ceſi part.* 3. § lxv. *Tzemach David ad An.* 4983.

ted as St. *Paul* was, (to whom, I imagine, they were ambitious to equall ſome of their Doctours,) but by the power of the Spirit they might enter, while they were inhabitants of this world, into Paradiſe. Of the ſweet enjoyments of which place therefore they cannot ſure be uncapable, when they have quite left this body: ſince the Apoſtle ſuppoſes his ſpirit might go out of it in this rapture; when it perceived and underſtood things without the uſe of phantaſms, after the manner of Intelligences.

2. Wherewith he was ſo raviſhed, and ſo fully aſſured of future bliſs as ſoon as he died, that he deſired above all things to be diſſolved, and to be with *Chriſt*, which he lookt upon as far better then to ſtay here any longer. i. *Phil.* 23. This eager longing clearly ſhews what he expected, as ſoon as he was got looſe from this body: and that he did not think death would ſtupefie his Soul, and bereave it of all ſenſation; but rather open to it a freer paſſage into that delightfull place, whither he had ſome time been caught up. For it would not have been better for him to depart, and to be with *Chriſt*, if he ſhould not have had the fa-

vour to enjoy that ſweet converſation with him there, which was not denied him whilſt he was here. He tells us indeed, that when our Lord ſhall appear, then is the time when we ſhall *appear with him in glory*; but before this he expected upon his departure to be *with Chriſt*, though not in ſo full an injoyment of him as hereafter. This made him ſo confident and well aſſured in his perpetuall conflicts with ſo great troubles and calamities, becauſe he lookt upon himſelf in this preſent bodily ſtate but as a ſtranger, who was abſent from his own country and friends; to whom he deſired to return even in this way, through the midſt of many afflictions. 2 *Cor.* v. 6. Which he repeats ver. 8. *We are confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be abſent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.* So we render this phraſe ἐνδημῆσαι ver. 6. when he ſpeaks of his being in the body. From which I conclude, that he thought his Soul, which while it did ἐνδημῆσαι ἐν τῷ σώματι, inhabit the body, had ſuch a ſenſe of future happineſs, as made him reſolutely endure all manner of troubles to come at it, would much more enjoy a bliſsfull ſenſe of it when it did ἐνδημῆσαι πρὸς τὸν Κύριον, dwell in its own country with the Lord.

3. Hence

3. Hence you reade that thoſe who were diſſolved, or rather whoſe ſouls were torn out of their bodies by the hand of cruell perſecutours, cried unto God for vengeance on their murtherers. vi. *Rev.* 9. Which argues Souls departed do not ſleep, and think of nothing that paſſed here; but are ſo awake, as to remember the gracious promiſes of God, which they live in expectation to ſee fulfilled. It may be ſaid indeed, that by ψυχαὶ *Souls* we are to underſtand onely their *Bloud*, as the word is ſometimes uſed in the Holy Scriptures; and as I thought, when I writ the former Treatiſe *, it might be taken here. But upon farther conſideration I find reaſon to correct that miſtake: For St. *John*, I obſerve, ſpeaks of them as *perſons* (ver. 11.) who had *fellow-ſervants* and *brethren* here upon earth; who were to finiſh their teſtimony to *Chriſt* by laying down their lives for him, as they had done. Till which time thoſe *Martyrs* were to reſt and acquieſce in what they enjoyed already; having obtained very great honour: For there was given ἑκάστοις to every one of them *white robes*. Mark the place, and you will be ſatisfied fully

* *Vid.* Chap. viii. p. 501.

that he ſpeaks not of their bloud. For St. *John* ſaw theſe Souls ὑποκάτω τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, *under* or *beneath the Altar*; of incenſe, that is, (as a Great man hath proved*:) whereas the bloud of the Sacrifices was poured out at the bottom of the Altar in the outward court. They were not *without*, but *in the Sanctuary*; though in the lower part of it, beneath the Altar of incenſe; not yet advanced to the higher part of it, much leſs to the Holieſt of all. They were admitted, that is, unto a greater nearneſs to God then others, (as the Church always believed the *Martyrs* were,) though not yet conſummated; as the Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſuppoſes himſelf ſhould not be till the day of *Chriſt*'s appearing. But St. *John* adds, (2.) that they had *white Robes* given them in that place where they were: which ſignifies they were a kind of heavenly Miniſters attending on the Divine Majeſty; or that they had exceeding great honour conferred on them: (xli. *Gen.* 42.) which would have done them no good at all, if they had not been ſenſible of the favour of God therein, and lived in great joy and feſtival pleaſures; which white raiment alſo in the holy languages uſes to denote. ix. *Eccles.* 8.

* Mr. *Thorndike* Rights of the Church *p.* 95. 310.

And

And thus the *Jews* themſelves, I obſerve, are apt to ſpeak of this matter; making the deſcription of the City and Temple in the latter end of *Ezekiel* to be a repreſentation of the other World. For when it is affirmed by one Doctour in the *Talmud* *, that there were not above ſix and thirty juſt men in every Age that *behold the face of God*; and another objects, that the Court about the City (called *The LORD is there*) was exceeding great, no leſs then eighteen thouſand meaſures round; xlviii. *Ezek.* 35. this Anſwer is returned, that the difficulty is ſmall: For ſome behold *the very light of God*; others onely *ſee it obliquely*, and have no more but *a certain obſcure duskiſh image of it*. There are but few of the former, ſaith the *Gloſſe* there, who have the *Light in its power*; but of the other, who have a *weaker* ray, *obliquely* and at a *diſtance*, there are very great numbers. Which agrees with thoſe words of our Saviour, *In my Father's houſe are many Manſions*, as they are expounded by the two St. *Gregories*, *Nazianzen* and *Nyſſen*, and others: who by a *Manſion* underſtand τὸν ἐκεῖθεν ἀνάπαυσιν *, *&c.* the reſt and the glory which is laid

* *Vid.* Coch. *exc. Gem. Sanhedrin c.* xi. *n.* 30.

* Nazianz. *Orat.* 33.

laid up there for the bleſſed; but ſuppoſe ſome to be in a *higher*, others in a *lower* condition, proportionable to the vertuous diſpoſitions they carried out of the world with them. Which being very different, they believed ſome to ſee leſs; and others to be like *Gorgonia*, the Siſter of St. *Greg. Nazianzen*, whom, in the concluſion of his Eleventh Oration, he ſuppoſes to be *in the clear light of the glorious Trinity.*

4. But it would take up too much room in this Treatiſe, if I ſhould enter into that diſcourſe: and therefore I proceed to conſider, that though they made this difference, according as we ſee in a City (to follow the former compariſon) ſome are accounted the chief, others the more inferiour ſtreets and houſes, and ſome are nearer unto, others more remote from the royal palace: yet they did not imagine thoſe manſions to be dark, nor thoſe that were in them to have their eyes ſhut up with ſleep; but all to enjoy the light of life. *They lead*, as another *Jewiſh* Writer * ſpeaks, *a moſt ſweet life in that light, which is the figure and reſemblance of the ſupreme light*, to which they ſhall be admitted at the laſt. Thus *Moſes*

* *Vid.* Jo. de Voyſin *de Jubileo L.* i. *cap.* 16.

Moses and *Elias* appeared in great splendour at our Saviour's transfiguration on the Holy Mount; where they talkt and discourſed with him about his *departure*, that he was to accompliſh at *Jeruſalem*. Which ſhews, they not onely continued in being, but had ſenſe, and motion, and lived in much happineſs and bliſs. Which we are not to take for a ſingular privilege indulged to them; for the Apoſtles, you may obſerve again, lookt upon our Saviour as the εἰκὼν *exemplar* or *pattern* to which God had determined they ſhould all be *conformed*. viii. *Rom.* 29. And their conformity to him here in this world being ſo exact, that they paſſed the very ſame way to bliſs that he did, through moſt cruell ſufferings; they could not doubt but upon their departure the conformity would ſtill hold as exactly. That as He, when he died, immediately went to *Paradiſe*; (where he promiſed the good Thief ſhould be, before his Reſurrection;) ſo they ſhould enter into the ſame bleſſed place immediately upon their death, and live there in a joyfull expectation of him, to come and change even this vile body, that it may be σύμμορφος *conformed* to his glorious body. iii. *Phil.* 21.

And

And this is the ſenſe alſo, you may obſerve once more, of the *Voice from heaven*, which commanded St. *John* to write, *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord.* (xiv. *Rev.* 13.) With which the *Spirit* immediately joyned its teſtimony, ſaying, Ναὶ, *Yea* (*i. e.* it is certainly true, believe what the *voice* ſays,) *from henceforth*, or now at this preſent, I promiſe them a bleſſed *reſt from their labours*; and *their works ſhall follow with them*: that is, they ſhall be refreſhed with a ſweet remembrance of what they have done and ſuffered for *Chriſt Jeſus*. It is uncertain indeed whether the word Ἀπάρτι be to be referred to the former words, *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord*; or to thoſe that follow, *Yea, ſaith the Spirit*: But either way our Church underſtands it in the ſame ſenſe, as appears by the Funerall office. Where, referring it to the former ſentence, the words are thus recited; *I heard a voice from heaven ſaying, Write, From henceforth* (or Now, at this preſent time) *bleſſed are the dead*, &c. They are not onely in expectance of future bleſſedneſs, but in poſſeſſion of an happy ſtate already; and find inconceivable ſatisfaction in venturing their very lives for *Chriſt*'s ſake:

ſake: who for this very end, as St. *Paul* obſerves, laid down his life for us, that *whether we wake, or whether we ſleep, we ſhould live together with him.* 1 *Theſſ.* v. 10.

There are thoſe who from this word *Sleep* (by which the ſtate of the dead is frequently called in theſe books, there being nothing liker Death then Sleep,) would inferr the perpetuall motion and operation of the Soul before the Reſurrection. For it is very buſy and active, even when all the Senſes are lockt up by ſleep; and hath at that time received very high illuminations from God: which is a ſign that, if the body were quite dead, it would not be without them. *Ariſtotle*, I find in *Sextus Empiricus**, obſerves thus much, that in Sleep, when the Soul is by her ſelf, ἀπολαβοῦσα τὴν ἴδιον φύσιν, reſuming her own nature, ſhe propheſies and foretells things to come: and declares, ſaith he, hereby what ſhe ſhall be ἐν τῷ κατὰ θάνατον χωρίζεσθαι τῶν σωμάτων, when by death ſhe ſhall be ſeparated from all bodily things. By which conſideration, St. *Auſtin* tells us that *Gennadius*, a famous Phyſician in his time, and very religious and charitable, was wonderfully inlightned, when he was in doubt whether there was any life after death.

* *L.* viii. *adv. Mathemat. p.* 312.

* *Epiſt.* 100. *ad* Euodium.

death, "God, ſaith he*, would by no "means deſert a mind ſo well diſpoſed; "but there appeared one night to him in "his ſleep a very handſome young man, "who bid him follow whether he ſhould "lead him. Which he thought he did, "till he came to a Citie, where on the "right ſide he was ſaluted with the ſwee-"teſt voices that ever he heard; which "the young man, upon his inquiry "what this meant, told him were the "hymns of the Bleſſed and of the Saints. "What he ſaw on the left ſide, he did "not well remember: but awaking he "lookt upon this as a dream, and thought "no farther of it. Till ſome time after "the ſame young man appeared again to "him, another night; and askt if he "knew him. To which he anſwering, "Yes very well; he askt him where he "had ſeen him. And *Gennadius* pre-"ſently related, how by his conduct he "was once led to hear the hymns and ſee "the ſight before mentioned. Here the "young man askt him, whether he ſaw "and heard what he related in his ſleep, "or waking. In my ſleep, ſaid *Genna-*"*dius*. True, ſaid the other; and now "thou ſeeſt me in thy ſleep, doſt thou "not? To which he conſenting; his in-

"ſtructer

" ſtructer proceeded to ask him, Where " is thy body now? In my bed-chamber, " ſaid *Gennadius*. Doſt thou know then, " replied the young man, that thy eyes " are now bound up, and ſhut, and lie " idle in that body, ſo that with them " thou ſeeſt nothing? I know it, ſaid " *Gennadius*. What eyes then are theſe, " ſaid his inſtructer again, wherewith thou " ſeeſt me? Here *Gennadius* being ſilent, " not knowing what to ſay; the young " man laid hold of this occaſion to open " to him the meaning of all theſe queſti- " ons, ſaying, Thoſe eyes of thy fleſh, " which is aſleep and lies in thy bed, " have no imployment and doe nothing " at all; and yet thou haſt eyes where- " with thou ſeeſt me. Juſt ſo when thou " art dead, and the eyes of thy fleſh are " put out and can doe nothing, *vita tibi* " *inerit, quâ vivas, ſensúsque, quo ſentias,* " *there will be life in thee, whereby to live,* " *and ſenſe, whereby to perceive.* Beware " now hereafter how thou doubteſt that " *life remains after death.* And thus that faithful man told St. *Auſtin*, the Provi- dence and mercy of God quite removed his doubt.

But

But I ſhall not inſiſt on ſuch reaſons as theſe, my intention being onely to ſhew what we learn from the *Apoſtles*, the faithfull Witneſſes of *Jeſus Chriſt*, to confute that drowzy conceit of the Sleep of the Soul; which like a thiſtle ſprung up first * in the wild deſerts of *Arabia*, but ought not to be ſuffered to grow in the Garden of God. In which this Doctrine of the Apoſtles, I might ſhew, hath been ſo deeply rooted, that to teſtify the Churche's belief of it, was one great end of the Commemorations and Prayers which were made for the faithfull departed this life. So we learn from *Epiphanius* his confutation of *Aerius*, who did not approve of this practice. The very firſt account he gives of it is, *that thoſe who were preſent might believe* ὅτι οἱ ἀπελθόντες ζῶσι, &c. *that they who were departed live, and are not gone out of being; but exiſt and live with the Lord.* And they did not ſuppoſe, I may adde, that thoſe whom they remembred in their ſacred offices, were frying in the flames of hell, as the preſent *Roman* Church doth; but in a ſtate of happineſs, though imperfect, and ſome more imperfect then other. This we learn from the Service of the Church

* Euſeb. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. L.* vi. *c.* 37.

Hæreſ. lxxv. *n.* 7.

Church in thoſe days, eſpecially at the funeralls of the departed. Whenſoever they celebrated the dreadfull myſteries, together with the holy *Martyrs and Confeſſours and Prieſts*, whom they commemorated, they prayed for the whole World, for which *Chriſt*'s bloud was an expiation: not forgetting thoſe who ſlept in him, whom the Prieſt deſired thoſe who were preſent to remember. For we are all one body (ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome* *, who reports this,) though one member be brighter then another: and therefore they deſired all might have συγγνώμην καὶ παραμυθίαν pardon and conſolation. Which they hoped they had, it is plain from the *Funerall Office*, which, in great part, was Euchariſticall, conſiſting of Pſalms and Hallelujahs. So the ſame great perſon informs us in his Commentaries on the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, where he takes occaſion from thoſe words, ii. 15. [*deliver them who through fear of death*, &c.] to reprehend the bitter lamentations and wailings of thoſe who mourned for their dead friends, as altogether inconſiſtent with what the Church did at their funeralls. Where *the bright lamps* * they ſaw burning proclaimed that they attended them as valiant champions:

* *Hom.* xli. *in* 1 *Corinth.* p. 524. 20.

* *Hom.* iv. p. 453 35. 454. 10.

and the *hymns* that were ſung glorified God, and gave him thanks for crowning him that was departed, and for freeing him from his labours, and for delivering him from a ſtate of fear, that he might have him with himſelf. *Are not the hymns*, ſaith he, *for this end? is not this the meaning of the ſinging Pſalms?* πάντα πάντα χαιρόντων ἐστίν: *and all theſe things are proper to thoſe that rejoyce:* according to that of St. *James*, *Is any well-pleaſed? let him ſing Pſalms.* And a little after he bids them mind what they ſung at thoſe ſolemnities. *Return unto thy reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee:* and, *I will fear no evills, for thou art with me:* and again, *Thou art my refuge from the affliction that compaſſeth me about.* This was part of the *Funerall-ſervice*, to which he tells them they did not attend, but were drunk with ſorrow; or elſe they would not have made ſuch lamentations. For to ſay, *Return unto thy reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee*, and yet to weep and lament, is a mockery and a ſtage-play; not a ſerious piece of devotion. This and much more that great Man there ſays, to ſhew how prepoſterous it was to mix their lamentations with thoſe

thoſe hymns: which ſuppoſed the Souls of the deceaſed to be in reſt and peace, and to partake liberally of the bounteous goodneſs of God; and therefore ought to have compoſed and comforted the minds of the living, who confeſſed their Friends had made a bleſſed change of a troubleſome life, for one full of quiet and happy repoſe. To which the *Order of buriall* in our Church, which profeſſes to tread in the ſteps of the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, is very conformable. Where we Sing, *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord*, &c. and acknowledge that *we ought not to be ſorry, as men without hope, for them that ſleep in him:* becauſe *the Spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord do live with God; and, being delivered from the burthen of the fleſh, are in joy and felicity.* Not compleat indeed, but we pray him (after we have given thanks for *delivering our Brother out of the miſeries of this ſinfull world*) *to haſten his kingdom, that we, with all thoſe that are departed in the true faith of his holy name, may have our* PERFECT CONSUMMATION *and* BLISS *both in* BODY *and* SOUL *in his eternall and everlaſting glory.*

But it is not my buſineſs, as I ſaid, to ſeek for teſtimonies to this Truth any lower then from the APOSTLES themſelves, who as they preached the glad tidings of *Eternall Life* every-where, ſo they proteſt moſt ſolemnly, (and they were men, you ſhall hear, who taught and practiſed the ſtricteſt truth and honeſty,) that they had a moſt *certain* knowledge of it: and therefore we may ſafely rely upon their teſtimony. Thoſe words wherewith St. *John* begins his *firſt* Epiſtle may ſerve in ſtead of all that might be alledged to aſſert this; ver. 1, 2, 3. where he gives an account of the reaſon they had to publiſh to the world that WORD OF LIFE, (*Jeſus* and his Goſpell,) as they had done a long time. "For they ſaid nothing concer-
"ning that *Eternall Life*, which it was in
"the purpoſe of God the Father from the
"beginning to beſtow, and now was
"manifeſted to them, but what they had
"HEARD; that is, received from his
"own mouth, and been conſtant Audi-
"tours of. Which made them the more
"confident to declare theſe things to o-
"thers, becauſe they had them not at the
"ſecond hand, but immediately from
"himſelf. And

And becauſe it is the leaſt of teſtimonies to ſay we have *heard* a thing, therefore he adds, in the ſecond place, that they had *SEEN it*; "beheld, that is, "all the marvellous works he did to con-"firm this Doctrine which he delivered; "as the word *Seen* ſeems to be underſtood "xv. *Joh.* 24. *If I had not done among "them the works which none other man did, "they had not had ſin: but now they have "SEEN, and yet hated both me and my "Father.* They *ſaw* the vaſt numbers "that he fed with a little food, the ſick "that he cured with ſpeaking a word, "the dead that he raiſed when all their "friends gave them for loſt, and deſpai-"red of ſeeing them again in this world: "In ſhort, ſo many inſtances of his Di-"vine power and authority, that if they "ſhould have been written every one, "this Apoſtle ſuppoſes the World would "not have been able to contain the "Books that ſhould have been written. xxi. *ult.* But theſe are recorded which we find in the Goſpell, as he concludes the foregoing Chapter, *that we might believe that Jeſus is the Son of God, and that believing we might have Life through his Name.*

And leſt any ſhould imagine it was but a tranſient ſight they had of theſe things, and their eyes might be deluded, (as we ſometimes are when a thing ſuddenly flies away from us,) or that they were but ſeldom ſpectatours of theſe things, and ſo could not gather much from thence; he adds, in the *third* place, that they had *LOOKED on it:* that is, "had this "evidence continually before their eyes. "They ſcarce ſaw any thing elſe but mi-"racles. They had not leiſure ofttimes "ſo much as to eat their meat, by reaſon "of the great multitude of people that "came to be healed by him. They con-"verſed a long time with *Lazarus* after "he was riſen; and our Lord himſelf "was *ſeen* of them forty days after his "reſurrection, ſpeaking of the things per-"taining to the kingdom of God. And "when the Holy Ghoſt came, they them-"ſelves, to whom the Apoſtle here writes, "could teſtifie the wonderfull variety of "ſpirituall gifts that were poured on be-"lievers.

But becauſe we imagine that to *feel* a thing is far more conſiderable for our ſatisfaction then to *ſee* it or *look* upon it; (as

(as St. *Thomas* would not believe thoſe who had ſeen our Lord and heard him ſpeak, but he would put his hands into his wounds, before he would be ſatisfied;) therefore the Apoſtle tells us farther, that they declared nothing but what they had HANDLED of the word of life. That is, "there was moſt palpable evidence "and demonſtration given of the truth "of their report. They were ſo near "as to touch and feel that their eyes "were not deceived, when they thought "they ſaw ſuch miracles wrought. For "their own hands diſtributed the bread "and the fiſh to the hungry multitude. "And ſome of them untied the grave-"cloaths of *Lazarus* when he was raiſed "from the dead. And (to give one in-"ſtance for all) when he himſelf roſe a-"gain from his grave, they not onely "diſcourſed with him, and ſaw him eat "and drink, and beheld him ſeverall "times and in ſeverall places; but he "called them to him, and ſaid, *Behold "my hands and my feet; handle me and "ſee: for a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones, "as you ſee me have.* xxiv. *Luk.* 39. This very *handling* of him was a great argument of the *Eternall Life* which was with the Father, but was hereby made

manifeſt unto us; for it proves *his* reſurrection, and that is a proof of *ours*.

Now they having thus *heard*, and *ſeen*, and *beheld*, and *handled* theſe things, how could they chuſe but publiſh that *Jeſus* is the Authour of Eternall Life? And we receiving ſuch teſtimony from them, how can we refuſe to believe their word, *that we may have fellowſhip with them in God and his Son*; *i. e.* be partakers, as they were, in that moſt bleſſed Life of God and our Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*? "If we do but believe there were ſuch "men as St. *John* and St. *Paul* and all "the reſt, and if they had eyes and ears "and hands like other men; if they "were men of ſound brains and under-"ſtandings; (as it appears by their wri-"tings they were;) if any credit may "be given to ſober perſons, who proteſt "they heard thoſe voices from heaven, "ſaw thoſe miracles which they have re-"corded, converſed with our Saviour after "he roſe from the dead; (as there are no "Writers in the world deſerve credit, if "they do not;) nay, if they deſerve "more credit then any, conſidering what "they did and ſuffered, as you ſhall hear, "for the teſtimony of that which they

"ſaw

" ſaw and heard, and wrote to the world; " there is no doubt this *Life was manife-* " *ſted* moſt apparently to them, and they " had reaſon to *bear witneſs of it*, and " *ſhew it to us*: And we cannot but reſt " ſatisfied that it is the will of God *to give* " *Eternall Life* by his Son *Jeſus Chriſt* " our Lord. No queſtion to be made of it, unleſs we will queſtion all Hiſtories in the world, and believe nothing that is reported and delivered to us by others. Which if it were once reſolved, there would be an end of moſt of the trade, commerce and buſineſs that is managed in the world. And deeds and evidences which men have from their anceſtours would become void; and preſent poſſeſſion would be the onely title they could have to their eſtates.

But for our farther ſatisfaction, let me briefly ſhew, that the APOSTLES gave a continued Teſtimony to this truth, all the *three* ways whereby St. *John* ſaith *He came, by WATER, by BLOUD, and by the SPIRIT.*

I.

I.

As for the purity of their *Doctrine*, which is one part of the Teſtimony of *Water*, I have given an account of it in the firſt part of this Diſcourſe. Which demonſtrates it was of that nature, that it had been an idle attempt to preach it, and endeavour to plant it in the World, had they not believed, and been able to prove, that their Maſter, who employed them, would give them, and all thoſe who obeyed their word, the reward of *Eternall Life*. To which if you adde the holineſs of their *Life*, which is another part of this Teſtimony, you cannot think that men of ſuch ſincerity in all other things would have affirmed ſo confidently as they did that which they did not take to be true; nor have proteſted they ſaw and heard and felt ſuch things as they never had any notice of. But if you will needs ſuppoſe they might be ſo vile, (which is very unreaſonable;) yet who can think they would have denied themſelves ſo much as they did for their Maſter's ſake, in which a great part of their piety conſiſted, if they had not been ſure that he would lead them by ſuch

ſuch means to everlaſting life? This extraordinary contempt of all preſent things, even of life it ſelf, as you ſhall hear, plainly ſhewed they were not merely big words which they ſpake, of being with God and our Saviour, to ſee the Glory which the Father had given him; but things which they heartily expected. For does any man find ſuch inclinations in himſelf, as ſhould make him imagine they would have left their trades, their houſes, their poſſeſſions, their wives, kindred, friends, all that is deſirable in this world, and perſwade thoſe who were the deareſt to them to doe ſo too; if they had not had an aſſurance, upon ſuch grounds as were apt to convince others as well as them, of the recompence they ſhould meet withall hereafter in a better life? Who can believe that St. *Paul* would have quitted all his Dignities, his hopes of greater preferment, his eſteem and reputation with the wiſeſt and chiefeſt perſons in the Nation, his eaſe and quiet, and every thing elſe, and betaken himſelf to the troubleſome ſervice of a deſpicable Maſter; if he had not known and ſeen it as clearly as the Sun in the firmament, that *Jeſus*, whom he ſerved, was raiſed from the dead, and made the

King

King of Glory, and would prefer all thoſe that proved faithfull to him unto the greateſt honour in the heavens? For what reaſon ſhould thoſe good men live *as having nothing*, and all the time be as chearfull as if *they poſſeſſed all things?* Did they not look upon themſelves, think you, as heirs of a Kingdom which could not be taken away from them? Reade St. *Paul*'s deſcription of himſelf to *Timothy*, (2. iii. 10, 11.) who he ſays "had "fully known *his doctrine and manner of* "*life*, (not onely what he had been wont "to teach, but how he had followed his "own inſtructions,) what his *purpoſe* and "aim had ever been, his *fidelity*, his *le-* "*nity* towards offenders, his *charity* to "all Chriſtians, his *patience* under trou- "bles of all ſorts: for he was *perſecuted* "and endured great *afflictions* by that "means at *Antioch*, (where they thruſt "him out of the city,) at *Iconium*, (where "an aſſault was made upon him to ſtone "him,) at *Lyſtra*, (where they actually "ſtoned him.) And in how many other "places he had been vilely uſed, *Timothy*, "he ſays, could not be ignorant, having "been a companion with him in his tra- "vels. xvi. *Act.* 3. Now what think you of ſuch a perſon as this? Do you take him

him for a dolt and an ignorant ſot? Was this great Apoſtle a mere lump of clay, who was ſenſible of nothing; and imagined others ſo ſenſeleſs, as that he might without any reaſon propound this example to *Timothy* for his imitation? How came they to be ſo ſtupefied, as to chuſe rods, and whips, and ſtones, and all other miſeries, when they might have lived in eaſe and peace? Nay, to glory in theſe things alone, as if there had been nothing that could have done them ſuch honour, 2 *Cor.* xii. 5? They did *both hunger and thirſt*, (as I noted from the ſame Apoſtle in my former Book, 2 *Cor.* iv. 11.) *they were naked and buffetted, they had no certain dwelling-place, they laboured working with their own hands, being reviled they bleſſed, being perſecuted they ſuffered it, they were made as the filth of the world, and the off-ſcouring of all things.* Which things no body in his wits can think men of their underſtanding would have endured, if they had not been provided of *meat* which the world knew not of, and been nouriſhed and ſuſtained with the hope of glory, and aſſured of eternall *manſions* in the heavens, and known that they ſhould inherit *a bleſſing*, and be made more *honourable* and *glorious* with

Jeſus

Jeſus for ever, then the World for the preſent could make them vile and contemptible.

Theſe things are ſo clear, that the bare recitall of them is ſufficient to ſatisfie us they were no deceivers, nor men of light belief, who took things upon truſt without good evidence; but had the greateſt reaſon to endeavour to *baptize* all Nations into this belief, as they did by an indefatigable diligence: which was no ſmall teſtimony of the power and glory of the Lord *Jeſus*.

II.

And their BLOUD ſpeaks as much. For as *none of them*, ſaith St. *Paul*, xiv. *Rom.*7. *lived to himſelf*, ſo *none of them died to himſelf*; but conſecrated even his *bloud* to the Service of *Chriſt*, if he pleaſed to command it. Whereby they ſealed to this Truth; and ſhewed they were ſo far from doubting of immortall Life by the Lord *Jeſus*, that they unfeignedly deſired to be diſſolved and to be with him. Witneſs St. *Stephen*, who was ſtoned becauſe he ſaid he ſaw the Lord *Jeſus* in the higheſt glory; which he was never

never more aſſured of then when he died, for then he recommended his Spirit to him, as our Saviour had done his to God the Father. Witneſs *Antipas*, a faithfull Martyr. Witneſs all thoſe Souls whom St. *John* ſaw beneath the Altar: who had all learnt from our Saviour what they muſt expect in his Service, when he ſaid, *The Brother ſhall deliver up the Brother to death, and the Father the Child; and the Children ſhall riſe up againſt their Parents, and cauſe them to be put to death. And ye ſhall be hated of all men for my Name's ſake.* Under which afflictions they had nothing to ſupport them, but that which he immediately adds, *He that endureth to the end ſhall be ſaved.* x. *Matth.* 21, 22. Theſe few words were a ſufficient incouragement to them, and made them not regard their lives for the ſake of *Chriſt Jeſus*; who *hath aboliſhed death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Goſpell. For the which cauſe*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *I ſuffer theſe things, and am not aſhamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him againſt that day.* 2 *Tim.* i. 10, 12. And for this cauſe he would not have *Timothy* to be *aſhamed of the teſtimony of our Lord, nor of him his priſoner*;

priſoner ; (ver. 8.) but to imitate him by being *partaker of the afflictions of the Goſpell* ; which *he endured*, as he adds in the next Chapter ver. 10. *for the elects ſake, that they alſo might obtain the Salvation that is in Chriſt Jeſus with eternall glory.* The Apoſtles nothing doubted that *they themſelves* ſhould obtain Salvation and immortall glory this way : and they hoped likewiſe, by their conſtant ſufferings even to the death, to draw *others alſo* to the faith, or confirm them in it ; that they might have a ſhare with them in this happineſs, and be willing to ſuffer for it. *For it is a faithfull ſaying*, he adds, *that if we be dead with him, we ſhall alſo live with him : if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him :* ver. 11, 12.

I ſhall conclude this with that Diſcourſe of St. *Paul* 1 *Cor.* xv. 30, 31, 32. where he alledges this among other reaſons, to confirm that Church in the belief of the Reſurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come, that He and the reſt of the preachers of Chriſtian Religion would not have been ſuch fools, as to have ſuffered in that manner they did, had they not ſeen plain demonſtrations

ſtrations of this truth. For they were ſo miſerably treated, that they carried their lives in their hand; and were every hour, for any thing they knew, at the brink of the grave. He for his part had been compelled to encounter with wild beaſts on the Theatre at *Epheſus*: (ſo ſome ancient Writers underſtand him, who knew there was nothing more common with the Pagans then to cry, *Chriſtiani ad Leones*, *Away with the Chriſtians to the Lions*: and it was a puniſhment to which the vileſt Malefactors were ſubject, particularly Magicians; as we learn from another *Paul* * the Lawyer:) or at leaſt he ran as great hazzards as thoſe men did who were expoſed unarmed to the fierceſt creatures, ſuch as Lions, Bears, Tigers, Leopards, wild Boars, and Bulls, and Dogs. (To every one of which we have examples of Chriſtians, in the Eccleſiaſticall Story, that were condemned.) And it was for no other cauſe but this, that he preached *Jeſus* and the Reſurrection. How could they think him ſo ſenſeleſs, as to put his life in ſuch danger upon this account, if he was not fully perſwaded of that for which he ſuffered ſo much; nay, had not good ground to be of this belief? He knew the value of life as well

* *L. v de receptis ſententiis.*

as other men. He was no ſtone nor block, as I have ſaid, that had no feeling of pain. He naturally loved eaſe and quiet and pleaſure, as well as the reſt of the world. And his education had not been ſuch as to incline him to believe things careleſly; eſpecially ſuch a thing as this, quite contrary to all his former principles, and as contrary to his preſent preferments and future hopes. And therefore, without imputing to him the higheſt degree of folly and ſtupidity, the *Corinthians* could not disbelieve what he preached of the Life to come. Concerning which he had received ſuch full ſatisfaction, and was convinced of it by ſuch undeniable arguments; that he choſe rather to loſe his life, then to deny it, or not to preach it.

III.

And that He and the reſt of the *Apoſtles* were not deceived nor judged amiſs in this matter, the mighty power of the SPIRIT, which wrought continually in them and with them, abundantly teſtified. This was ſufficient not onely to ſatisfy *them*, but to ſatisfy the reſt of the world, that *Jeſus*, as they ſaid, was alive, and

and made the Lord of all: who was ready at hand on all occaſions to bear witneſs to this Truth when they preacht it, that he would give *Eternall Life* unto his followers. This power of the SPIRIT going along with them was a thing ſo notorious, that the Pagans in ſome places cried out, *the GODS are come down to us in the likeneſs of men*; and could ſcarce be reſtrained from doing divine honours to them. xiv. *Act.* 11, 18. And whereas there had been ſome wonderfull things heretofore done among the *Jews*, if we may believe themſelves, they now all ceaſed; as if God had transferred all power on earth into the *Apoſtles* hands. For they tell us, there were *Ten Signs* in the Houſe of the Sanctuary*, which never failed: as, that no woman ever miſcarried by the ſmell of the fleſh that was burnt upon the Altar; no fly was ever ſeen in the Houſe; nor did the fleſh of the Sanctuary ever ſtink; nor the rain ever extinguiſh the fire; nor the greateſt winds hinder the ſmoak from aſcending in a ſtraight pillar towards heaven; &c. But forty years before the Sanctuary was deſtroyed, all theſe Miracles ceaſed; according to that of the Pſalmiſt, (which they apply to this buſi-

* *Pirke Avoth cap.* v.

* *Talmud Bab. in Joma apud* Raimund. *p.* 297.

neſs*;) *We ſee not our ſigns, nor is there any prophet to tell us how long.* lxxiv. 9. When the veil of the Temple was rent in ſunder, God, who dwelt in the Holy place, left his habitation, and went out at that breach to return no more thither. All the wonders were now without thoſe doors, in the open ſtreets, in every houſe, in the whole world. Which was a notable *ſign* that *Jeſus* was *Chriſt*, and alive from the dead, by whoſe power the Apoſtles profeſſed to doe all their wonderfull works.

By theſe they proved that he was exalted at God's right hand, and ſate, as he ſaid he would, on the throne of his Glory. And their proof was the ſtronger, becauſe there was no great thing done (as formerly there had) but onely what was wrought by their hands; who reigned now with him as ſo many Princes, and *ſate on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael.* xix. *Matth.* 28. xxii. *Luk.* 30. They were ſupreme Governours (whoſe office it is to *judge*) in the Church under our Lord *Chriſt*, it plainly appeared by the mighty power wherewith their Goſpell was accompanied. Which came, as St. *Paul* tells the *Theſſalonians*, not

in

in *word* onely, but in *power and in the Holy Ghoſt.* That is, in Miraculous works, and in extraordinary gifts, which brought along with them *a full aſſurance:* inſomuch that he left it to them to tell the world *what manner of men they were among them.* And if any enquire what was the effect of it, he tells us, that they were perſwaded by this miraculous power, *to turn from idols, to ſerve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raiſed from the dead, even Jeſus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.* 1 *Theſſ.* i. 9, 10. This was the fruit of their labours and travels, to convince a number of people, by wonderfull operations upon the ſick, nay upon the dead, and by gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, that *Jeſus* was raiſed from the dead, and poſſeſſed of Eternall life in the heavens; from whence he will come to beſtow it upon the faithfull; whom he will never ſuffer to periſh, but reſcuing them from deſtruction, make them ever happy with himſelf.

And whoſoever afterward revolted from this Faith, I may adde, and ſet themſelves to oppoſe it, the Apoſtles ſhewed their power (which was a great witneſs

to Chriſtianity) as much in their plagues and puniſhments, as in the cures they wrought upon others. It may well be thought, that thoſe in the *Corinthian* Church who did not believe the Reſurrection, were reclaimed from their errour by that Letter which St. *Paul* wrote to them; for we hear nothing of it more in the next Epiſtle. But ſome there were in other places that obſtinately perſiſted in their folly; and not contented to disbelieve what the Apoſtles taught in this matter, contradicted and blaſphemed it. Two of them are named in the 2 *Tim.* ii. 17,18. *Hymeneus and Philetus*, who taught *that the Reſurrection was paſt*, and conſequently denied the rewards of the Life to come. The occaſion of their *erring* thus *from the faith* ſeems to have been this, that the Apoſtles often ſpeaking of a ſpirituall reſurrection from a ſtate of ſin to the life of godlineſs, (*Rom.* vi. *Col.* iii.) which they ſuppoſed all Chriſtians had already felt; theſe men fanſied there was no other, affirming the reſurrection was paſt, and none to come. If they had onely doubted of it, the Apoſtle, it is like, would not have ſo ſharply puniſhed them, no more then he did the *Corinthians:* But *they blaſphemed*, as he

he expreſly tells us of *Hymeneus*, 1 *Tim.* i. 20. that is, reproached this Doctrine as a fooliſh opinion; and reviled, it is like, the Apoſtles who were the preachers of it. And therefore he inflicted on them the moſt grievous puniſhment, by *delivering them up to Satan:* which was not ſo little as merely baniſhing them the Chriſtian Society, but turning them over to the power of the Devill, ὡς δημίῳ τινὶ ϛρεβλῶντι καὶ μαϛιγοῦντι, as unto a publick Executioner, to torture and ſcourge them. They are the words of St. *Baſil* *, with whom agree divers others of the ancient Doctours; who think the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſurrendring ſuch perſons into his hands, that he might inflict bodily diſeaſes or pains upon them, to humble and bring them down to ſubmit to the Apoſtolicall doctrine, when they felt the miraculous effects of their Authority. For that's the reaſon this puniſhment is called *delivering up to Satan*; becauſe it viſibly appeared by ſome plagues on the body, that they were faln under his power, by being thrown out of the Church. He was as a common Gaoler and Executioner in a City or Kingdome; the Apoſtles as the Magiſtrates and Governours, (as was ſaid before,)

* *Homil. in princip. Proverb. p. 459.*

fore,) ſitting upon thrones to judge and paſs ſentence on men: either by giving the Holy Ghoſt to thoſe who ſincerely believed; or by delivering thoſe to be tormented and ſet on the rack by this Evill ſpirit, who blaſphemed the Chriſtian Religion. There was then no other power in the Church to correct and puniſh them for ſo high a crime; and this being done *by the power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, (as you reade 1 *Cor.* v. 4.) was a notable teſtimony of the SPIRIT to the truth of Chriſtianity, and bad all men beware how they ſpake evill of this holy Doctrine: eſpecially of this fundamentall part of it, that the Lord *Jeſus* will give us everlaſting life, and raiſe us up at the laſt day. The terrible execution which they ſaw done upon thoſe who ſubverted this foundation of all piety, was a great means to confirm all Chriſtian people in the faith: and to make them reverence thoſe who had this mighty power, either to give men eaſe, or to torment them; to reſtore men to life, or to ſtrike them dead; to give them, as was ſaid before, the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, or to put them into the poſſeſſion of the Devill.

There

There is a great deal of difference, it is obſerved by *Tertullian**, between an *Angel of Satan* ſent to *buffet* a man; and being *delivered up*, or put into the poſſeſſion of *Satan* himſelf. To the former St. *Paul* himſelf was, by the Divine permiſſion, obnoxious for his exerciſe. 2 *Cor.* xii. 7. The latter was the puniſhment of blaſphemers, and other horrid offenders, for their cure. But both ſerved to give a teſtimony to our Saviour, and to ſettle the hope of immortall Life. For by the *Angel of Satan which buffeted*, that is, diſgraced and vexed St. *Paul*, a great many ancient Writers * underſtand thoſe troubles and ſore afflictions, all ſorts of injuries and reproaches which infidels and wicked men, by the inſtinct of ſome of the Devil's agents, tormented the Apoſtle withall. *Alexander the Copperſmith*, (ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*,) who did St. *Paul* ſo much miſchief, *Hymeneus and Philetus, all thoſe that ſet themſelves againſt the Goſpell, caſt him into priſon, beat him, drove him out of their cities, were Miniſters of Satan*, ἐπειδὴ τὰ τοῦ Σατανᾶ ἐπράττον, *becauſe they did Satan's buſineſs:* who by ſuch inſtruments laboured all he could to diſhearten the Apoſtles, and hinder the free courſe

* *L. de Pudicitia, c.* xiii.

* *S.* Chryſoſtom. Theodoret. Photius *apud* Oecumen. Ambroſ. Theophylact.

courſe of the Goſpell. Here now appeared the mighty power of *Chriſt*, which *reſted*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, or *took up its dwelling* in them. 2 *Cor.* xii. 9. They were never ſo ſtrong as when they were thus afflicted. Then they mightily prevailed, and advanced the Kingdom of *Chriſt*, by whoſe powerfull grace they endured all hardſhips and diſtreſſes courageouſly: and demonſtrated they had a ſtrong and immovable hope of being with him in that bleſſed place, unto which St. *Paul* was rapt juſt before this *Meſſenger of Satan*, as we render it, raiſed ſuch a terrible ſtorm of perſecution againſt him. By that glorious ſight he was fortified againſt it; and, ſtanding as firm as a rock himſelf, confirmed others in that faith, which made him ſo invincible, that he *gloried* and *took pleaſure* in all thoſe *infirmities, and reproaches, and neceſſities, and perſecutions, and diſtreſſes*, which that Angel of Satan ſtirred up againſt him: ver. 9, 10. That was all the Devill got by his ill uſage of him, which onely gave the Apoſtle matter of glory. For when our Saviour pleaſed not to grant his deſire of having this Angel removed, but onely told him *his grace ſhould be ſufficient for him*; immediately he adds, that

that he would *gladly glory more then ever in his afflictions.* Which plainly ſhews, both what he meant by that *Angel of Satan*; and how much hereby the Chriſtian Religion was promoted, and the Souls of believers ſtrengthened in the faith. They might eaſily believe he had been in the *third heavens*, when they ſaw him ſo much ſuperiour to all the power on earth, and the powers of the air too; who conſpired to beat him down and oppreſs him. All the art in the world could not ſo declare the ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα the unutterable words St. *Paul* heard, (which the impious *Cainites* and *Gnoſticks* *, in a Book of theirs called Ἀναβατικὸν, concerning St. *Paul*'s aſcent, pretended to relate,) as this inexpreſſible power of *Chriſt* reſiding in him, and ſupporting him under the greateſt miſeries; which declared thoſe words remained ſtill imprinted in his Mind.

* Epiphan. *Hæreſ.* xxxviii.

And that other *power of Chriſt*, whereby the Apoſtle delivered up high offenders to Satan, (that he might inflict plagues and diſeaſes or aches and pains on their bodies,) as evidently ſhewed what a great Miniſter he was in *Chriſt*'s Kingdom; and how credible the Doctrine

was

was which he preached to them. For he was *ready to revenge all diſobedience* with remarkable puniſhments; and alledges this power as a proof of his authority, in the next Chapter, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 2, 3, 4. *If I come again, I will not ſpare, ſince you ſeek a proof of Chriſt ſpeaking in me.* "He is not *weak indeed towards you, but* "*is mighty in you:* (having given by me "exceeding great demonſtrations of his "power and my Apoſtleſhip, xii. 12.) "Yet ſince you are not convinced, it "ſeems, by what you have ſeen already, "and deſire a farther proof that *Chriſt* "ſpeaks in me, you ſhall have it; *I will* "*not ſpare you*; that is, I will puniſh you, "and make you know it to your coſt. "*For though Chriſt was crucified through* "*weakneſs*, (*i. e.* according to his mor-"tall condition which he aſſumed for "our ſake,) *yet he lives by the power of* "*God*, which raiſed him from the dead, "and gave him all power in heaven and "earth. You ought not therefore to "contemn one becauſe he is weak, *i. e.* "afflicted, as you are apt to do me; for "*Chriſt* went this way to glory: and "*though we alſo are weak in*, or *with, him*, "*i. e.* ſuffer for his ſake, which is no "more then he did; *we ſhall live with*

"*him*

"*him by the power of God toward you*;
"that is, make you feel, that as he is a-
"live, (*i. e.* mighty and ſtrong now that
"he is raiſed from the dead,) ſo are we
"alſo by the power of God, which we
"ſhall make uſe of for chaſtiſing your in-
"ſolence. Which plainly ſhews, that
theſe Apoſtolicall cenſures had moſt migh-
ty effects; which demonſtrated *Chriſt*
was alive, and wrought moſt powerfully
in theſe his Miniſters. By whom as he
gave miraculous gifts, ſo he miraculouſly
puniſhed offenders; and never more ter-
ribly then when they were in ſuch a
weak (that is, afflicted) condition, that
it tempted ſome people to contemn them.
Then they ſhew'd their power, and made
it appear that, as *he, who was crucified, li-
ved*; ſo did they, who were perſecuted
and deſpiſed: being armed with *divine
weapons* or engines, which were mighty
through God to batter down the ſtron-
geſt holds; ſubverting the pitifull rea-
ſonings of ſuch as *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*,
and making every proud conceit ſtoop,
which advanced it ſelf againſt the Chri-
ſtian Doctrine. 2 *Cor.* x. 4, 5. This they
did by the power I am ſpeaking of, which
baffled all oppoſers, and made them
crouch as ſo many captives to theſe Mini-
ſters

ſters of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Who in their externall condition were mean, and expoſed to the ſcorn and contempt of all the world; but ſo mighty and great by this authority, that the Apoſtle ſaith, (ver.8.) it had not been vanity, if he had boaſted of it more then he did. For this Apoſtolicall *Rod*, as he calls it 1 *Cor.* iv. 21 *. was like the *rod of God* in the hand of *Moſes*. It did miraculous things by inflicting terrible puniſhments, for which no cauſe but his heavy cenſure appeared, on thoſe who contradicted and blaſphemed: and was as ſenſible a ſign of the preſence of God in the Church, as the things which the rod of *Moſes* did were of his preſence with the ancient *Iſraelites*. *Great fear came upon the whole Church, and upon as many as heard theſe things*, ſays St. *Luke*, (*Act.* v. 11.) when he relates how the other great Apoſtle by this rod ſtruck *Ananias* and *Sapphira* dead.

* *Vid. S.* Chryſoſtom. *in loc.*

Encom. εἰς κορυφ. Ἀποστ.

For "hereby they learnt *two* things, "ſaith *Aſterius*: both that our Saviour "was God; and that the teacher of his "laws had Angels attending on him, who "were ready to execute his pleaſure. He "would have the lame man walk, and "preſently that grace came. He thought "good

" good to puniſh theſe ſacrilegious per-
" ſons, and the puniſhment in an inſtant
" was inflicted. Theſe things were ſuffi-
" cient to aſtoniſh the moſt ſtony hearts;
" and to perſwade them firmly ὡς οὐκ ἀπά-
" της ἦν τὰ ῥήματα, that they were not
" words of deceit which the Apoſtle
" ſpake, but that God was certainly with
" him, and that the myſtery which he
" preached was true and holy.

O the wonderfull power of our Lord *Chriſt*, to whom all things in heaven and in earth and under the earth do bow and obey! whoſe Miniſters had ſo large an Authority, that Angels were ready to wait upon their word! Great is his power, which by ſuch weak inſtruments brought ſuch mighty things to paſs. *His Apoſtles, ſay the Gentiles, were men of no account, mean fiſhermen and ſuch like ruſtick people. True; and we adde moreover, that they were unlearned, illiterate, poor, vile, ignorant and deſpicable. But this is no diſparagement to them; it is their glory and peculiar praiſe, that ſuch men as theſe appeared more illuſtrious then the whole World. For theſe idiots, theſe ruſticks, theſe illiterate men, were too hard for the wiſe, and overcame the mighty, and per-*

S. Chryſoſt. *Hom.* iii. *in* 1 *Corinth.*

perſwaded the rich and great to ſubmit to their authority. Great therefore was the power of the Croſs; for theſe things were not done by any humane ſtrength. Conſider a little. A fiſher-man, a tent-maker, a publican, an obſcure illiterate man coming from Paleſtine, a far diſtant country, encounter with the Philoſophers at their own doors, with the Rhetoricians, with the ableſt ſpeakers, and in a ſhort time put them all down: though infinite dangers oppoſed them, and nature fought againſt them, and length of time and old cuſtomes mightily reſiſted them, and Dæmons alſo armed themſelves, and the Devil muſtered up his forces, and moved all things; Kings, Rulers, People, Nations; Cities, Barbarians, Grecians, Philoſophers, Rhetoricians, Sophiſters, Oratours, Laws, Judgment-ſeats, all manner of Puniſhments, a thouſand ſorts of deaths. But all theſe were no more able to ſtand before the breath of theſe poor Fiſhermen, then the ſmall Duſt before the blaſt of powerfull Winds.

How came it about that the weak thus overcame the ſtrong? that twelve naked men not onely encountred, but vanquiſht thoſe that were ſo well armed? If you ſhould ſee twelve men unskilled in warlike affairs, and

and not onely unarmed, but weak in body, attack an infinite hoſt of well-diſciplin'd and well-appointed ſouldiers, and, receiving a thouſand darts, ſhould not be wounded, nor have any harm, but ſhould take ſome of their oppoſers priſoners, and kill others, and diſperſe all; would any one think this was done by humane means? And yet the trophee's of the Apoſtles are far more admirable. For it is not ſo ſtrange for a naked man not to be wounded, as for an obſcure, an illiterate perſon, a fiſher-man, to baffle ſo much wit and eloquence: and not to be hindred in their preaching, neither by their own ſmall number and poverty, nor by the dangers they met withall, nor by the prepoſſeſſion of cuſtome, nor by the auſterity of the things they commanded, nor by daily deaths, nor by the multitude of thoſe that were in errour, nor by the dignity of thoſe that miſs-led them.

Who would not admire that mouth of St. Paul *by which* Chriſt *was preached; and a light broke forth more amazing then lightning, and a voice more terrible, even to Devils, then any clap of thunder? This voice brought them bound like ſlaves, this purged the world, this cured diſeaſes, and threw out wickedneſs, and introduced the* Id. Homil. ult. in Ep. ad Roman.

truth. What good was there which was not done by that mouth of his? It drove away devils, it unlooſed ſins, it ſtopt the mouth of tyrants, it ſilenced the tongues of Philoſophers, it brought the world near to God, it perſwaded Barbarians to Chriſtian wiſedome, it ſet all things in order on earth, and had a power alſo in heaven; binding whom it would, and looſing there, according to the power given him. As a lion let looſe among a company of foxes, ſo did he fall upon the ſocieties of Dæmons and Philoſophers: and like a thunderbolt ſtruck through all the armies of the Devill; who was ſo afraid of him, that he trembled at his ſhadow, and ran away if he did but hear his voice. He delivered the inceſtuous Corinthian *to him, being far diſtant from the place; and again he ſnatcht him out of his hands, being perfectly acquainted with his devices. And in like manner he taught others by the ſame ſeverity, not to blaſpheme.*

But let us not content our ſelves merely to admire him; let us not onely be aſtoniſht at him: let us imitate and follow him. What though we cannot doe ſuch miracles as the Apoſtles did? and there is no hunger and other miſeries to be endured?

(*the*

(the times being peaceable and quiet, God be bleſſed:) yet there is their piety and the holineſs of their life to be tranſcribed, which was no leſs admirable. And this is the nobleſt conflict; this is the ſyllogiſm which cannot be contradicted; this by our Works. Should we diſcourſe never ſo excellently, but live no better then others; we gain nothing. For unbelievers do not mind what we ſay, but what we doe; ſaying, Do thou firſt of all follow thine own words, and then perſwade others. For if thou telleſt us of millions of good things in the other world, but art ſo intent upon the things of this, as if there were no other; we believe thy works rather then thy words. For when we ſee thee greedy to ſnatch other mens goods, bitterly bewailing thy friends deceaſed, and in many other things offending, how ſhall we believe thee that there is a Reſurrection? Thus unbelievers are hindred from being Chriſtians.

And therefore having ſeen how glorious our Saviour is, being inſtructed in his Religion, and made partakers of ſo great a gift, let us lead a life agreeable to our principles; that ſo we may injoy thoſe good things which Chriſt *hath promiſed. For He there-* Id. Homil. xii. in Johan.

fore appeared, not onely that his Disciples might behold his glory in this world, as they say they did, (1. Joh. 14.) but also in the world to come: For, I will, saith he, that where I am, they may be, and see my glory. And if he appeared so illustriously here, what shall we say of his glory there? O happy, thrice happy they, more happy then can be expressed, who shall be thought worthy of that glory! Which if we should be so unhappy as not to see, better had it been for us, if we never had been born. To what purpose do we live and breath; what are we, if we miss of that Light? if we may not be permitted then to see our Lord and Master? If those who enjoy not the light of the Sun, lead a life more bitter then death; how miserable will their condition be who are deprived of that light? This loss will be punishment sufficient: though this is not all they must expect. For being banished from this Light, they shall not onely be cast into outer darkness; but there burn perpetually, and miserably consume, and gnash their teeth, and suffer a thousand other miseries.

Let us awake therefore, let us look about us, let us use our utmost endeavours, that we may enjoy the happiness Christ designs

for

for us; and be far remote from the river of fire, which runs with great noiſe before the dreadful tribunall. Into that if we fall, there is no redemption. And therefore let us purify our life, let us make it bright and ſhining; ſo that we may have boldneſs of acceſs to the bleſſed ſight of our Lord, and obtain the promiſed good things, through the grace and loving-kindneſs of Chriſt Jeſus; *by whom and with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghoſt be glory world without end.* Amen.

Kk 3 CHAP.

Chap. XIII.

The Use we are to make of this RECORD.

I.

AND in the very entrance of so pious a design, to improve the great grace which Heaven hath bestowed on us, it becomes us to stand amazed at the transcendent love of God our Saviour: who not contenting himself to have thoughts and intentions of good towards such wretched Sinners, hath been pleased to make us a gracious promise that he will bless us; and to acquaint us, by no less Messenger then his own Eternall Son appearing from heaven in our flesh, with the secret purposes of his heart to give us the greatest Blessedness. There is nothing so astonishing as this; whether we consider the incomparable excellency of the Good he designs us, or the favour he hath done us in revealing it to us, or the glory of that person by whom he reveals it, or the certainty we have that this is a

true report, *that God hath given to us Eternall Life, and this Life is in his Son.*

O moſt joyfull news! ſhall we poor mortalls live for ever? and live there where *Jeſus* is? May ſuch as we preſume to expect ſuch glory, honour and immortality, as he hath brought to light by his Goſpell? O wonderfull love! which might have concealed its kindneſs, and yet eternally obliged us. It had been enough, if we had got to heaven, without knowing before-hand we ſhould be ſo happy. Why ſhould ſuch offenders injoy the comfort of hoping for ſo great a Happineſs, while we are here in theſe earthly priſons? Might we not have been well contented, to creep upon our hands and knees to ſo high a glory? Had we not been fairly uſed, if with our heads hanging down, and not daring ſo much as to lift up our eyes to that holy place, we had travelled through this world, and at laſt found our ſelves, beyond all expectation, at reſt with *Jeſus?* But, O the love of God, which hath bid us hold up our heads, and look above, and behold our Lord in his glory, and hope well, yea be confident, that he *hath ſeated us together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus!*

Jeſus! We are indebted to him beyond all thoughts, for promiſing us ſo freely, out of his exceeding great love, and giving us ſo evident a right to ſuch glory and honour, as our own unworthineſs and guilt forbad us to promiſe our ſelves, or to have the leaſt expectance of.

And what is it that he hath ſo freely promiſed? To look into that high and holy place where he is? at ſome diſtance to behold his glory? to have an Angel come ſometimes to viſit us, and bring us ſome meſſage from him in ſome of the ſuburbs of heaven? And a great favour too, I aſſure you. A very ſingular kindneſs it ought to be eſteemed, if we vile wretches may be permitted to be ſo happy, as but to come near the gates of the celeſtiall palace. Well would it be for us, to come but within the ſound of thoſe melodious hymns which the heavenly hoſt continually ſing: or to live but in ſome of the moſt remote corners of that heavenly countrey; and there enjoy, for many Ages, the ſweet ſociety of ſome good Friends, in pure love and innocent converſation. But hark; He tells us we ſhall live with him, and ſee his Glory, and be with his Son *Jeſus*, and reign

reign together with him in his heavenly Kingdom, and be equall to the Angels, and enter into the joy of our Lord, and continue with him for ever. *What manner of love is this, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God; and being like him, behold him as he is!* Where is our love? whither is it run? after what is it wandred, if it be not here ready to acknowledge this kindneſs, in making us ſuch *great*, ſuch *exceeding great and precious* promiſes? Ah me! that we ſhould have loſt our ſelves ſo much, as not to find our affections forward to meet ſuch a love as this, with the higheſt tranſport of joy! When our hearts ſo abound with love, that we have enough for every thing in the world; when there is not a pretty bird or a dog but we have ſome to ſpare for it; have we none at all for our Lord God, for LOVE it ſelf, for *that* Love which hath *ſo* loved us?

Ah bleſſed *Jeſus!* that thou ſhouldſt be pleaſed to doe ſo much for thoſe, whoſe hearts thou kneweſt to be ſo cold, that they would ſcarce be warmed with the brighteſt beams of thine inconceivable love! How ſhall we excuſe our ſelves to thee, that our Souls are ſtill ſo frozen, after

after thou, *the Sun of righteouſneſs*, haſt ſhone ſo long ſo powerfully upon us?

Let us conſider, are we fed with a mere fancy? do we live onely in a pleaſing dream? or are we left in doubt of the truth of theſe things, and hang in ſuch ſuſpence, that we know not what to think of them? No ſuch matter neither. He hath compleated his kindneſs, by giving us a *Certainty* and full aſſurance of thoſe things which are revealed to us in his Goſpell. Here are WITNESSES of the higheſt quality to atteſt the truth of his Love: by whom *we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding that we may know him that is true*, &c. *This is the true God, and Eternall Life.* And as if *one* or *two* were not ſufficient, here are *ſix* Witneſſes come to tell us how he loves us. Heaven and Earth conſpire to draw our hearts to the love of him; who hath not onely given us exceeding great *Promiſes*, but exceeding great *Certainty* that they are all true and faithfull. He knew very well they would ſeem incredible; being as much beyond all our thoughts, as they are beyond our deſerts. And therefore he took care to give us ſuch evidences of their

their truth, as ſhould not merely work in us belief, but a full aſſurance of faith. By *Himſelf*, by his *Word*, by the *Holy Ghoſt*, by the *Water*, the *Blood*, and the *Spirit*, we are ſo many ways rooted and grounded in this perſwaſion, that we cannot but ſee we are doubly beholden to his infinite bounty: firſt, for ſuch exceeding great and precious promiſes; and then, for as wonderfully great confirmation of them, to our unſpeakable and endleſs comfort.

And are we not yet apprehenſive of his love? Doth it not yet feelingly touch our hearts; but leave us indifferent whether we will love him or not? Ah fools that we are! who muſt be ſent to ſchool to thoſe brute creatures mentioned before, to teach us better nature and better manners. How do our very dogs (as I have ſaid elſewhere) follow us and fawn upon us for a cruſt of bread? how cloſe do they keep to us? how ready are they to defend us and our houſes, and all belonging to us? Even when we are dead, ſome of them have been known not to forſake their Maſters for any other. And what is all this ſervice for, but ſuch things as we have no uſe of, or make no account

account of our ſelves? O bleſſed God! who can endure to ſtay ſo long as to hear this applied to himſelf, before he learn to love thee? I ſee whither this leſſon tends: I behold already how ſhamefull it is to diſpoſe of my heart away from thee. Thou haſt given us thine own dear Son: What a gift! how great a boon! Thou haſt promiſed us eternall life: How invaluable a poſſeſſion! Thou haſt given us good hopes and ſtrong conſolation: What an exceſſive kindneſs! Shall we not devote our ſelves to thee? ſhall we not forſake all, and follow thee, whitherſoever thou wilt lead us? We cannot refuſe: we muſt reſolve to ſurrender our hearts intirely to thee. We ſhould be worſe then Dogs, ſhould we not with all our minds and ſoul and ſtrength love that tranſcendent goodneſs, which by the moſt miraculous demonſtrations hath perſwaded us, that we ſhall live eternally with himſelf, and enjoy the everlaſting fruits of his infinite love. This is the moſt comfortable news that could poſſibly arrive from heaven. Should we have had our own wiſhes, nothing greater, nothing ſo great could have entred into our hearts deſire. This ſweetens the bitterneſs of all afflictions, and this heightens

all

all our joys; when we hope the one ſhall ſhortly, but the other ſhall never end.

Plutarch deſervedly blamed *Epicurus* of great incogitancy, who, making all happineſs conſiſt in Pleaſure, denied the ſtate of the future life: which it is the greateſt pleaſure to hope for and expect. Nothing caſts ſuch a damp upon all a man's enjoyments here, as the cold thoughts of an endleſs death ſeizing on his heart. He cannot but ſigh to think that ſhortly there muſt be a finall period put to all his delights. As on the contrary, this gives life and ſpirit to them, if he can think they ſhall be improved and perpetuated for ever. And therefore how much do we owe to the love of God, who hath given us aſſurance even of the Reſurrection of our body to an immortall life; and told us, it ſhall be ſo far from being loſt by going to the grave, that, like Seed, it ſhall riſe again quite another thing then it was when caſt into the ground? no longer weak, contemptible, corruptible and mortall; but powerfull, ſpirituall, glorious, incorruptible and immortall: and conſequently capable of purer, more ſpritely, and more laſting

lasting pleasures then now it injoys.

"O how much more *comfortable* is this "opinion, then that of the *Epicurean*, "(as *Tertullian* excellently speaks *,) "which vindicates thee from destruction! "How much more *seemly* then the *Py-* "*thagorean*, which doth not send thee "into beasts! How much more *full* "then the *Platonicall*, which restores e- "ven thy body as a new dowry to thee! "O taste and see how gracious the Lord "is. *Bonum Deum novimus; solum optimum à Christo ejus addiscimus* *: *We knew God was good before; but so most excellently good, we learn one from his Christ; who bidding us, next him, to love our Neighbour, doth that himself which he expects from us. He loves even our body, which is so many ways of kin to him.*

* De Testimonio animæ c. iv.

* Id. De Resurrectione carnis cap. ix.

II.

But that we may understand how much we are indebted to him, and thereby become more sensible of his wonderfull Love, give me leave to shew, as briefly as I can, how little the world knew, before our Saviour came, of this Happiness which he hath revealed to us: and how much

much his loving-kindneſs hath abounded towards us more then to his more peculiar people in former days; whoſe love notwithſtanding he expected ſhould be intirely devoted to him and his ſervice.

It would be very eaſy to ſhew, were there not danger of making this Treatiſe too big, how weak all the reaſonings of the Philoſophers were about this matter; and in what uncertainty they left men after they had written whole Books on this Subject. Among all thoſe who endeavoured by humane argumentations to find it, "there were but few (as St. *Au-*
* L. xiii. *De Trinitate* c. 8. & 9. "*guſtine* truly obſerves *) that could, "and they but ſcarcely, arrive at the "knowledge of the immortality of the "Soul; though men of great wit, and "abounding with leiſure, and inſtructed "in the moſt ſubtill pieces of learning. "And when they had reſolved, ſays he, "that it was immortall, they could not "find a ſettled bleſſed life for it. But ma-"ny of them thought it returned again to "the miſeries of this life. And they "who bluſht at this, and placed the Soul "in immortall bleſſedneſs without the "body, deſtroyed their own opinion by the

"the revolution which they fanſied of all "things back again, after a certain period "of time, to that condition wherein they "were before: As he ſhews more fully in his Book of the City of God *. There is nothing truer then that of St. *Paul*, ii. *Eph.* 12. that they *had no hope*, *viz.* of the Reſurrection and eternall Life. For, to ſay nothing of the Reſurrection, (to which they were perfect ſtrangers,) ſome of the greateſt Philoſophers denied the immortality of the Soul. *Socrates* himſelf, the very beſt of them, was not confident of it; but left it in doubt as a thing uncertain. Nor was *Ariſtotle* more aſſured; no nor *Tully* and *Seneca*: who could not by all their reaſonings attain a ſure and well-grounded *hope* of it; but were forced to confeſs, after all their diſquiſitions about the Soul, that, τῶν χαλεπωτάτων ὅτι λαβεῖν τινα πίστιν περὶ αὐτῆς *, *it is one of the moſt difficult things in the world to receive any belief* or certain knowledge *about it*. All that they ſaid was conjecture, and very weak, very uncertain, and ſometimes very extravagant. Which ſhews in what a miſt they were, without the light of Divine revelation, which we by God's great grace injoy.

* *Lib.* xii. *cap.* 20.

* Ariſtoteles *L.* i. *de Anima c.* 1.

They themſelves ſeem to be ſenſible ſometimes of the want of an heavenly Guide, to conduct them with more certainty to the knowledge of that happineſs which they deſired; as any one may ſee in *Plato*'s Dialogue* on this Subject. Where *Socrates* his arguments for immortality, juſt before he was going to die, have ſo little force to conclude any thing certainly; that *Simias* had reaſon to ſay, it is either ἀδύνατον, ἢ παγχάλεπόν τι, *impoſſible, or a thing extream difficult*, to know any thing clearly of it in this life. "But a man muſt chuſe the "beſt reaſons he can find, which are "leaſt liable to exception; and he muſt "venture to embark himſelf in theſe, and "ſail by them through this life: unleſs he "can be ſo happy as to be carried ſafer "and with leſs hazzard ἐπὶ βεβαιοτέρου "ὀχήματος, ἢ λόγου θείου τινὸς *, *in a ſurer ſtedfaſt chariot, of ſome divine word*, that is, or revelation. Which is a plain acknowledgement that this onely can give us perfect ſecurity, and ſatisfy us ſo as to take away all doubt. And this God hath granted to us Chriſtians, to whom he hath ſpoken in theſe laſt days by his Son, and given this Record of him, that Eter-

* *in Phædone.*

* p. 85.

Eternall Life is in him. And therefore *Lactantius* might truly say *, "*Immortales esse animas Pherecydes & Plato disputaverunt; hæc verò propria est in nostra Religione doctrina. Pherecydes* and "*Plato disputed* that Souls were immortall; but it is our Religion onely that "*teaches* this as its proper lesson. *For* "*to know what is true is in no man's* "*power, but his that is taught of God.* And their arguments, he shews in the next Chapter, were so weak, and so much there was to be said with equall probability on the other side, that *Tully*, after all things weighed on both parts, concluded he knew not what to say but this, *Harum igitur sententiarum, quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit; Which of these opinions therefore are true, God onely knows.* And in another place, *Both these opinions have learned Authours; but which is certain, cannot be divined.* In the next Chapter also but one he brings another such uncertain resolution of the same great man; who says, *We should go confidently to death, in which we know there is either the greatest good, or no evill.*

* L. vii. Divin Instit. c. 7.

But what this *Summum bonum* greateſt *good* was, they were ſtill to ſeek. When they had ſuppoſed their Souls to ſurvive their bodies, they had no certain knowledge what the happineſs of their future ſtate ſhould be; but miſerably wandred in the darkneſs of their imaginations, as their ſeverall fancies led them. We need onely take the faireſt deſcriptions they have left us of the εὐσεβῶν χώρᾳ, country of the pious, to ſatisfy us how little men could know, when they had onely their own thoughts to direct them, of the ſtate of the other World. *Gobryas*, in a Dialogue aſcribed to *Plato* *, ſays, "that it is a region where the ſeaſons "of the year abound with all manner "of fruit, the fountains guſh out with "the pureſt water, the fields are cloathed "with all kind of flowers, and where "there are Schools of Philoſophers, The-"atres of Poets, Muſick and Dancing-"ſchools in perfection; together with "the neateſt Banquets, all ſorts of Dain-"ties ſpringing up of themſelves, a ſweet "eaſy life without any mixture of ſorrow "or grief: for neither the winter nor "ſummer are there in exceſs, but a well-"tempered air illuſtrated by the ſofteſt "beams

* *in Axiocho, p. 371. edit. Serran.*

" beams of the Sun: and there they that " are initiated in the Myſteries have the " preeminence, and rightly perform the ho- " ly offices. Which is not much different from the Paradiſe which the diſciples of *Mahomet* expect; who cannot raiſe their minds higher then the things they beſt fanſy in this World. Which makes them, being forbidden by their Law the drinking of wine here, to reckon this among the pleaſures of the other world, that they ſhall have liberty there to drink as much as ever they will, and be in no danger of intoxication. For the wine of Paradiſe, the *Alcoran* * ſays, doth not make men drunk, as ours doth; but paſſes away all by ſweat, which ſmells as ſweet as any Musk.

* *Miſcell.* D. Pocock. *c.* vii. *p.* 300.

Which I mention for no other end, but to ſhew how ſtupidly blind men are, when they are left to walk in the ways of their own hearts: and how deeply we are indebted to the exceeding great love of God; who, when he ſaw the minds of men too weak to comprehend ſuch things, and that they ſtood in need of a Divine Teacher, (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* * ſpeaks,) was pleaſed, in his infinite condeſcenſion, to ſend one from the very

* *L.* v. *Stromat. p.* 548.

place, his own dear Son from heaven, τῆς ἀγαθῆς κλήσεως διδάσκαλος τε καὶ χορηγός, *both the Teacher and the Giver of that possession of Good; the secret holy token of that great Providence*, which took care, when men had lost themselves in vain imaginations, to lead them right by Him, who is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. Who hath made that certain, which was dubious; and that plain to every body, which was the hardest thing in the world to know before: and bids us lift up our Minds to God himself, with whom he dwells, and to whom he will bring us; that we may rejoyce in his Love for ever, in the happy company of Angels and good men, and in that place of which the Divine Majesty is the glory.

And it was but needfull, we shall see, he should send us such a Conductour; when we consider how little even they who were instructed by God himself understood of this Eternall Life, before our Saviour appeared.

It cannot be denied that the greatest part of the *Jews*, before our Saviour's coming, did expect the Resurrection of the dead, and Eternall Life. v. *Joh.* 39. xxvi.

xxvi. *Act.* 6, 7. And their pious Anceſtors before the giving of the Law, (xi. *Heb.* 9, 10, 16, 26.) as well as after, (ver. 35.) ſought an *heavenly country*, and had reſpect to the *recompence of reward*, and refuſed deliverance from their tortures, that they might obtain *a better reſurrection*. And their Writers in all Ages have ſpoken much of the *World to come*; whereby they underſtand ſometimes the days of the *Meſſiah*, and ſometimes the future State which we expect after death. All this is true; but it is as certain,

I. That they had no ſuch expreſs promiſes of theſe things, either in the *Law* or in the *Prophets*, as we have in the holy Goſpell. Where do you reade one ſuch ſaying as this (which *we* frequently meet withall) in the whole *Law* of *Moſes*; *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlaſting life. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he ſhall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my fleſh, which I will give for the life of the world?* vi. *Joh.* 47, 51. Promiſes indeed of the good things of this world are very rife, to thoſe that diligently keep God's commandments; to

whom he ſays, *I will give you the rain of your land in due ſeaſon, that thou mayeſt gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And I will ſend graſs in thy fields for thy cattel, that thou mayeſt eat and be full.* xi. *Deut.* 14, 15. Which is repeated again more largely, xxviii. *Deut.* 2, 3, &c. *And all theſe bleſſings ſhall come upon thee and overtake thee, if thou ſhalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the city, and bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the field. Bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground,* &c. *Bleſſed ſhall be thy basket and thy ſtore. Bleſſed ſhalt thou be when thou comeſt in, and bleſſed ſhalt thou be when thou goeſt out.* But in what place do you find any ſuch promiſes as theſe: *BLESSED are the poor in Spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven: Bleſſed are they that mourn; for they ſhall be comforted: Bleſſed are the pure in heart; for they ſhall SEE GOD: Bleſſed are they that doe his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life:* with ſuch like? of which the New Teſtament is ſo full, that a little time will not ſerve to number them all, y. *Matt.* 3, 4, 8. xxii. *Rev.* 14.

Alas!

Alas! when their Writers undertake to prove the life of the World to come out of their *Law*, it is out of places ſo far from the purpoſe, that this endeavour is a plain confeſſion they have no expreſs promiſes of it, but are fain to ſqueez the words to ſpeak that which is not in them. Shall I give a few inſtances of this truth? *Joſeph Albo*, a famous man of that Nation, and of good reaſon, from that place, xiv. *Deut.* 1, 2. *Ye are the children of the Lord your God; ye ſhall not cut your ſelves, nor make any baldneſs between your eyes for the dead: For thou art an holy people*, &c. thus fetches about his diſcourſe. "Behold, one would think the quite contrary ſhould be concluded. They "ſhould the rather mourn and grieve, becauſe they are the children of God: "as the Son of a King is more to be lamented when he is dead, then the "child of an ordinary man. But the true "interpretation is, as if he had ſaid, Seeing the moſt Bleſſed God is holy, and "his Miniſters are holy; thou alſo art "an holy people. All things are joyned "to that which is like themſelves: and "therefore without doubt your Soul is "joyned to the Angels, becauſe it is ho-

"ly

" ly as they are holy: for which cauſe " you muſt not cut your ſelves for the " dead, nor mourn more then is fit. And " this teaches us, *that there is a bleſſed* " *immortality for the Soul after death.* Such is his concluſion from thoſe words: which rather teach us, how hard it is to find any thing in the *Law* to that purpoſe; and how much we are bound to magnify the love of God for the revelation of his bleſſed will in the Goſpell. He argues ſomething better when he gathers it from thoſe words, xxxii. *Deut.* 47. where he ſaith there is a twofold happineſs or reward ſpoken of; one ſpirituall, [*it is your life,*] the other corporall, becauſe it is ſaid, *through this ye ſhall prolong your days.* And yet, ſo weak and infirm are their reaſonings that, at another turn they ſhall prove Eternall Life from this promiſe of *prolonging their days*; though it be expreſly added, *in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* For there being the letter *Jod* wanting in the word יאורכן in the *Fifth* Commandment, where God promiſes to prolong their days, they conclude that *there is no prolongation of days in this world*, but it belongs to the next. Nor can he find any clearer place to prove the Reſurrection of the body, then

then that in the ſame book, xxxii. *Deut.* 39. *I kill, and I make alive.* Nay, our Lord himſelf alledges a place for it, which was but dark till he illuſtrated it, and proved, by conſequence, not an expreſs promiſe, that *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob* ſhould be rewarded by him who called himſelf their God.

But we cannot, I think, learn this truth better from any then from *Philo*, a man much excelling all the modern *Jews*; who could find no places to this purpoſe plainer then thoſe cited by *Albo*; ſome of which he alledges, and adds others * no leſs weak and obſcure. Such as that iv. *Deut.* 4. *But ye that did cleave unto the Lord, are alive every one of you this day.* They that were good, ſays he, *Moſes* onely acknowledges for the living; and he witneſſes to them immortality, by adding, ye are alive ἐν τῇ σήμερον *this day.* For this *to day* is the ἀπέραντος καὶ ἀδιεξίτητος αἰὼν, world without end. If he could have met with any plain promiſes, who can think that a man of his parts would have uſed ſuch fancifull proofs as this? And yet this place I find R. *Gamaliel* moſt relied on, when after a long diſpute with the *Sadducees*, who would not

* *in his Book* Περὶ ψυχῶν.

not be satisfied that the Resurrection could be proved out of the *Law*, he at last referred them hither *. But he explained the words thus, *As ye are all alive to day, so you shall live also in the world to come.* For he supposes some of those whom *Moses* speaks of were dead, and yet the text says they *were alive*; because their union with God, by cleaving to him, made them immortall. Which is not much better then the next proof which follows in *Philo*, who fansies that in x. *Lev.* 2. where it is said, *Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord*, τὰ σύμβολα τῆς ἀθανασίας ἄδεται, "the tokens of "their immortality is proclaimed. And "that to say, they died *before the Lord*, "is as good as to say, *they lived*; for it "was not lawfull to bring a dead thing "into the presence of God. And this, "says he, is that which the Lord presently adds, *I will be sanctified of those who "draw nigh to me:* for the dead, as it is "in the Psalms, praise not God; ζώντων "τὸ ἔργον, it is the work of the living. Just thus he proves in another Book *, with the like force, that *Abel* lives τῷ ὄντι Θεῷ ζωῇ εὐδαίμονα an happy life in God, because the Scripture saith the voice of his bloud cried out against his wicked

* Manasseh ben Israel *L.* i. *de Resur. c.* 1.

* Περὶ τὸ τοῦ χείρονος, &c. *p.* 164.

wicked Brother. Now πῶς ὁ μηκέτ' ὢν διαλέγεσθαι δυνατός; how could he be able to ſpeak, if he was not in being? An argument which rather proves, *Moſes* ſpake nothing clearly of theſe things; for if he had, this Writer would not have contented himſelf with ſuch ſlender inferences. Which are as weak as that of R. *Johanan*, who proves the Reſurrection from that in xviii. *Num.* 28. where they are commanded to give the Lord's Terumah *to Aaron the Prieſt.* Who did not live, ſaith he, to enter into the land of *Canaan*; and therefore muſt be raiſed again to receive the portion of the Lord in that good Land. And yet this is as ſtrong an argument as that of R. *Solomon*, who concludes it merely from the two *Jods* in the word יִצֶר ii. *Gen.* 7. where it is ſaid, *the LORD God formed man*, &c. This ſignifies, ſays he, that man muſt be formed twice; once in this world, and once in the next at the reſurrection of the dead. There are more of this nature in the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrin* *, which I ſhall not trouble the Reader withall: but onely note, that the weakneſs and uncertainty of theſe proofs make the *Samaritans* brag of the advantage they have of the *Jews*; becauſe they ſay, in their

* *Vid.* Coch. c. xi. n. 2, 3, 9.

Penta-

Pentateuch (which therefore they would have to be the true copy of *Moſes* his Law) there is an expreſs text to prove the Reſurrection and the Life to come, which the *Jews* cannot ſhew. So deſirous were all that had the poſſeſſion of theſe Books, to find theſe Truths plainly recorded there; which even thoſe words, which the *Samaritans* pretend to be a part of their *Law*, do not contain. All is dark and doubtfull, after their beſt gloſſes and inferences; and we can conclude nothing certainly, but that God did not reveal theſe things to *Moſes*, who was ſent to make a covenant of another nature with the *Iſraelites*. Whence it was that they were ſo much diſputed by a great party among the *Jews*, as every body knows; the *Phariſees* affirming, and the *Sadducees* denying. Which left the minds of the multitude in much doubt, while they ſaw theſe two Schools ſo reſolutely oppoſing one the other.

And if we paſs from the *Law* to the *Prophets*, eſpecially to the Prophet *Iſaiah*, who (as *Abarbinel* ſays in his Preface to him) ſpeaks more clearly of the Reſurrection of the dead then all the reſt, we ſhall not receive much greater ſatisfaction. For

For the places from whence it is deduced do ſo evidently belong to another ſenſe in the firſt intention of the Prophet, that it forces us to confeſs this Doctrine was but obſcurely delivered in thoſe days; and that we could not have been certain of any other ſenſe, without the benefit of a Revelation. The proofs which *Abarbinel* brings are, xviii. *Iſa.* 4. xxiv. 18, 21, 22, 23. xxv. 8. xxvi. 19. lxvi. 8, 14, 24. and ſuch like: which when we have ſeriouſly examined, it will excite us with the greater admiration to acknowledge the infinite grace of God towards us; who do not ſee theſe things through ſhadows, nor have need of long diſcourſes to extract this heavenly Doctrine out of our Books, but in expreſs terms reade, *So God loved the world, that he gave his onely-begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* iii. *Joh.* 16. *And this is the promiſe that he hath promiſed us, even* ETERNALL LIFE. 1 Epiſt. ii. 25. What is there in all the Prophets like to this, *I am the reſurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live: And whoſoever liveth, and believeth in me, ſhall never die?* xi. *Joh.* 25, 26. The cleareſt place is that

that in *Daniel*, xii. 2. And yet, if we reade the words going before, (not to ſay Mr. *Brightman* *, *Grotius*, and other learned Writers upon the place,) we ſhall not be able to deny that he is ſpeaking of a particular Reſurrection, from exceeding great oppreſſion, to a long ſtate of proſperity. Which typified indeed in a very admirable manner (as *Ezekiel*'s dry bones and many other things did) the ſtate of the Generall Reſurrection and eternall Bleſſedneſs; but did not plainly reveal it. This was reſerved for our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, who brought life and immortality *to light* by his Goſpell; and openly proclaimed, that ALL (not MANY, as it is in *Daniel*,) *that are in their graves ſhall hear his voice, and ſhall come forth: they that have done good, unto the reſurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the reſurrection of damnation.* v. *Joh.* 28, 29.

* *Ib. & in* xx. *Rev.* 11.

II. But we ſhall ſee more reaſon to bleſs the infinite goodneſs of God towards us Chriſtians, if we obſerve, as we may eaſily from what hath been ſaid, that as they wanted the expreſs promiſes which we have; ſo what they underſtood of the nature of this Felicity, by the light they

they enjoyed, was but very dull in comparison with what is revealed to us. Who can see more even in their Books then they could do themselves; and find out that by the light of the Gospell, which was wrapt up in dark figures and clouds under the Law and the Prophets. As they saw *Christ* in *Isaac* and in a *Lamb*; so they beheld Heaven under the figure of *Paradise*, and in a *Land flowing with milk and honey*, and in the *Holy city*, and the *Temple* of stone; the greatest glory whereof was, when it was filled with the cloud. 1 *King.* viii. 10, &c. But now in the Church of the New Testament there is no Temple, *but the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it.* xxi. *Rev.* 22. And he saith not now, *I will dwell in thick darkness*; but, as it follows there, ver. 23. *the glory of God inlightens the Church, and the Lamb is the Light thereof:* who hath made us *with open face* to *behold his glory* in the heavens; and given us full assurance that *we shall be changed into the same image, from glory to glory:* 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. This he published so clearly, that the dullest and most illiterate souls saw there was no Master comparable to him, who had *the Words of eternall life*; and by his Death, Resurrection and Ascension,

opened to all believers the *Kingdom of heaven*. That's a word St. *Austin* confesses * he could not find in all the Old Scriptures: and St. *Hierom* says the same. There are Testimonies there, saith he, of Eternall life, whether plain or obscure it matters not: (though the places he alledges would have been obscure, if we had not been inlightned, before we reade them, by the Gospell:) *but this Name of the* KINGDOM OF HEAVEN *I can meet with all in no place: Hoc enim propriè pertinet ad revelationem Novi Testamenti; For it properly belongs to the Revelation of the New Testament.* And it is a word, as the Authour of the Answers *ad Orthodoxos* teaches us, which does not simply signifie the Resurrection, ἀλλὰ μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἀποκατάστασιν · but the state of things after the Resurrection, when we shall be so marvellously changed, as to be fit companions for the Angels, and reign with our Saviour in his glory.

* *Tom.* vi. *L.* xix. *contra Faust. Man. cap.* ult.

Of which things the *Jews* have now so little knowledge, that they expect onely to rise again to feast here upon earth with the *Messiah* whom they look for; and after they have spent some years in the enjoyment of the good things of an earthly Paradise, then they think their bodies

bodies ſhall die, and their Souls onely live for ever *. Let any one that is able but reade what *Manaſſeh ben Iſrael* hath writ of the Reſurrection; and he will find it ſuch poor ſtuff, that the beſt uſe that can be made of it will be, to put our ſelves in mind how much we ſtand ingaged to the Divine love, for acquainting us ſo plainly with the Happineſs he will give us at the Reſurrection of our bodies to an immortall life. Our Saviour, indeed, ſaith they might have learnt better out of the Scriptures, then to imagine there will be eating and drinking and marrying after the reſurrection: but there was none of their books could teach them that we ſhould be companions of Angels, and ſhine like the Sun, and ſee God, and be coheirs with *Chriſt*, and ſuch like things; which by the Goſpell are now ſo clearly diſcovered to us, that the moſt ignorant know more then the wiſeſt that want this Revelation.

* *Vid.* Jacchiades *in* viii. *Dan.* 14. & L' Empereur *ib.*

R. *Tanchum* (who would fain prove the life of the World to come from the words of *Abigail*, who ſpeaks of the binding *David*'s Soul *in the bundle of life*, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 29 *.) obſerves, that this Myſtery, which was a ſtranger to mens underſtandings in other nations, and far

* D. Pocock. *Not. miſcell. c.* vi. *p.* 91.

remote from their thoughts, to the knowledge of which none but very wise men came, by much labour and exercise, and after long disquisitions and difficult reasonings, was known then among the *Jews*, and manifest even to the Women. An argument, saith he, that wisedom was much spred in our Nation, and that, as *Moses* speaks, iv. *Deut.* 6. *we are a wise and understanding people.* Which is far truer of the Disciples of the Lord *Jesus*; among whom even the most simple are taught such things, as (whatsoever such a wise woman as *Abigail* may be supposed to understand in ancient days) their greatest Doctours have been so ignorant of since, that we see the words of *Isaiah* xxix. 14. fulfilled in them, *The Wisedom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Where is the wise?* (as St. *Paul* triumphs over them, 1 *Cor.* i. 20, 27.) *where is the Scribe? where is the disputer of this world? God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise.* Made use, I mean, of such men as the World, for want of humane learning, accounted no better then fools, to publish so clearly and with such evidence the doctrine of Eternall Life; that it may justly make men

men of the greateſt repute for learning bluſh, who could not ſpeak one wiſe word about it.

But ſuppoſe them all to have been indued with a clearer ſight then indeed they had of the Life to come; yet of the Bleſſedneſs which God intends for us there, that of St. *Paul* (1 *Cor.* ii. 9.) will ſtill be true; *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* There is a paſſage in the Prophet *Iſaiah* very like this, lxiv. 4. which the Jewiſh Doctours themſelves expound, in the myſticall ſenſe, of the future life; and from thence St. *Paul* is ſuppoſed to have borrowed theſe expreſſions. Though the very words themſelves of St. *Paul* being found in the Apocryphall Book of *Elias*, it is probable, as *Grotius* thinks, that this was grown a common ſaying among the *Rabbins*; who had been taught, by ancient tradition, to expect ſuch things in the days of the *Meſſiah*, as never any eye had ſeen, nor ear heard, nor had entred into any man's heart to conceive. Which is verified in the whole Revelation of God's will in the Goſpell; eſpecially in this part of it.

No man had so much as a thought or a desire of such things as God hath done for us, and intends to doe by our Lord *Jesus*. That he should send from heaven his own Son, his onely-begotten Son, begotten of him before all worlds, to be incarnate of a pure Virgin, to die for our sins, that he might rise again to sit at God's right hand, where our Nature shines far brighter then all the glorious host of heaven, are such things as they had no imagination of who expected the coming of *Christ*. Much less did they think of being so promoted by him in his heavenly Kingdome, that they should at last arrive at the same glory; and this clod of earth should be lifted up to the dwellings of Angels, and there be fashioned like unto the glorious body of *Christ* himself. These are things, as St. *Austin* you heard said before, which *are proper to the revelation of the Gospell*; wherein we reade this unheard-of love so plainly, that every child may understand it. But without this revelation, even they that have got the words sink into the dullest and most grosse apprehensions of the future State. The *Mahometans* use these very words to expresse the felicity they expect in their Paradise; saying, *God hath prepared*

pared for his ſervants ſuch things as eye hath not ſeen, nor the ear heard, nor have come up into the heart of man *. But they mean onely (as they themſelves explain it) virgins with fairer and larger eyes then ever they beheld in this world, and ſuch like things which I am aſhamed to name: beyond which theſe blockiſh vicious *Arabians* were not able to lift their minds. They are the words of *Maimonides*, upon this occaſion, who talks more rationally, I ſhew'd in the beginning of this Treatiſe, then many of his Brethren: in whom we find conceptions of the ſtate of the other life little leſs ſenſuall then theſe of *Mahomet*.

* D. Pocock. not. ad Gregor. Abul. Pharaj. p. 292.

Bleſſed be God therefore, ſhould we ſay, who hath *revealed* theſe unſeen, unheard-of, inconceivable things *to his Apoſtles by his Spirit*; and made us underſtand *what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints.* We can never thank him enough, who hath *delivered us from the power of darkneſs, and tranſlated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love.* By whom we underſtand *that fleſh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*; but *we ſhall be changed*, and made *ſpirituall*

and *heavenly*, after the image of him who is *the Lord from heaven*.

III. And we are bound to the love of God above all other men in another regard also; because he hath given us such *Records*, such *Witnesses* of this Eternall life; far greater then ever the World had seen or heard of before.

When men saw *Abel*, that first-fruit of righteousness, (as *Theodoret* calls him,) hastily pluckt by the hand of violence before it was ripe; and his murtherous Brother *Cain* survive, and take root, and build cities; there was great danger that men should be tempted to think it was in vain to serve God faithfully, there being as yet no hope of the Resurrection to comfort mens Souls. And therefore God was pleased for this reason, as *Theodoret* thinks, to translate *Enoch*, a man whose piety exceedingly pleased him, to the other world, εἰς ψυχαγωγίαν τῶν τὰς ἀρετὰς ἀσπαζομένων, that he might comfort the hearts of those who resolutely opposed vice, and contended for vertue, in a wicked Age. And this was apt to revive in all mens minds a belief of his Providence, and perswade them that piety never went

* *Quæst. 4. in Genes.*

went unrewarded; but that he who thus honoured *Enoch*, had taken care to recompenſe righteous *Abel*. Such was the grace of God to men before the *Law*. And afterward, when the *Iſraelites* were greatly degenerate, and faln into Idolatry, *Elias* their Prophet was carried in a chariot of fire by a whirlwind into heaven. Theſe things were mighty incouragements to good men, and were apt to confirm all in the belief of a future life. But who is there whoſe name ſtands upon record to teſtify that he ſaw *Enoch* ſnatcht from this mortall life, and taken up to God? And of *Elias* his tranſportation, what witneſs is there more then one, till our Saviour's time; when three of his Apoſtles beheld him and *Moſes* too (which was more then they knew of) appear in glory? Whereas we have no leſs then *Six* Witneſſes, three in Heaven and three on Earth, who many ways teſtify to us that *Jeſus is gone into heaven, and* (which is more) *is on the right hand of God, Angels and authorities and powers being made ſubject unto him.* 1 *Pet.* iii. 22. All his Apoſtles likewiſe ſaw him aſcend thither, and he hath appeared to more then one of them ſince his ſupereminent exaltation. What a vaſt difference hath his

his goodneſs made between us and former times? They beheld ſomething of the life to come in *Enoch*; *juſtorum tranſlationem præmonſtrans*, (as *Irenæus* * ſpeaks,) *who foreſhewed the tranſlation of the juſt*: but we ſee it clearly in the *Son of God*, who hath *promiſed* to take us up to himſelf. They ſaw a few beams of this glory in the face of *Moſes*, which ſhone on them when he came down from the Mount: but we in the face of *Jeſus Chriſt*; who, all the time he was among men, ſhone in ſuch illuſtrious works, that they *beheld his glory, the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father*; and after he aſcended to heaven, appeared ſeverall times from thence *in a light above the brightneſs of the Sun at mid-day*. What a vaſt difference is there between our times and theirs? Ἐπὶ γὰρ ἐν σκιαῖς ἦν ἡ πίστις· *For faith then was in Shadows*, (as St. *Greg. Naz.* *. ſpeaks of *Enoch*'s tranſlation,) and they had not the things themſelves clearly revealed to them; as we have by the grace of the Goſpell: which, when it appeared, was ſo bright and full of glory, that it ſcattered, nay conſumed, as the other *Gregory* * ſpeaks, πᾶσαν τὸ τότε τὴν σκιοειδῆ φαντασίαν, all that duskiſh umbratick repreſentation in types and figures; and inlightned all places

* *Lib.* v. *cap.* 5.

* *Orat.* xx. *p.* 366.

* Gregor. Nyſſen. *Hom.* v. *in Cantic. p.* 342.

ces with the beams of that true light, of life and immortality.

And more then this; there is not the leaſt evidence, no ſyllable of any record which teſtifies that any of theſe perſons had *life in themſelves*, to give to their friends, or ſo much as help them forward to Eternall Life. No; nor do they ſay that others who fear God ſhall have the ſame felicity to which they were carried; though their very going thither put pious men in hope of being happy with them in heaven. Whereas we have abundant teſtimonie in ſo many words, that *Jeſus hath life in himſelf*, and is *the Reſurrection and the Life*; that we ſhall *live by him*, and *with him*; that *none ſhall periſh* who believe on him, nor any be able to *pluck them out of his hands*; that *He* himſelf *will raiſe them up at the laſt day, and give unto them eternall life.* v. *Joh.* 26. vi. 57. x. 28. xi. 25. vi. 40, 44, 54.

Then indeed, in thoſe old times, was the Infancy of the World; and being little *Children*, (though they were *heirs*, yet) they differed not much from Servants. They knew not what their Father

ther intended for them, nor underſtood the inheritance to which they were born: no more then a child does what the enjoyments of a man are, till he come to that eſtate. Unto that growth we are now arrived, who have the knowledge of God's grace in *Chriſt Jeſus*. We are now the Sons of God: and though it do not appear (as I ſaid before) how we ſhall be his Sons hereafter; yet this we know, that we ſhall be like him when he appears; for we ſhall ſee him as he is. And therefore we cannot refrain from crying out again, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us.* Let us admire it, let us adore it; for never was there ſuch love.

III.

But it is not ſufficient onely to admire this incomparably tranſcendent love; which naturally excites in the hearts of thoſe that conſider it ſuch an ardent reciprocall affection, as leads them to an univerſall chearfull obedience to God's will. That's the proof our Saviour juſtly expects of our unfeigned love to him. He would have us, if we be truly ſenſible of the kindneſs he hath done us, not

labour

labour ſo much *for the meat that periſheth, as for the meat that endureth unto everlaſting life, which he will give unto us.* Take any pains, that is, to be ſo happy as he deſigns to make us: which no man can refuſe who hath once *ſet* his *affections*, not *on things* beneath, but on thoſe *which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God.* And this he may well expect we will doe, now that he hath ſo clearly demonſtrated where our Happineſs lies, and given us ſuch aſſurance that he lives for ever to bring us to it. This will move us, if any thing in the world can do it, to come when he invites us, to take his yoke upon us, and ſtoop to his burthen; ſo ſhall we find reſt to our Souls. This Eternall life, as the Divine Record tells us, is onely *in the Son of God:* part of the meaning of which words is, that onely by the Religion which our Lord *Jeſus* hath taught us is this great Good to be obtained. This is teſtified to us by God as much as any thing elſe, that there is no way to be happy but by his Son *Jeſus*; who hath ſhewn us the onely means to obtain glory, honour and immortality, is by patient continuance in well doing. True Vertue is the preparation for it, without which

which nothing is good for us; neither health, nor riches, nor beauty, nor ſtrength, nor power, no nor immortality, (as *Plato* * excellently diſcourſes,) ſhould we ſuppoſe it added to all theſe: but it is beſt that an evill man ὡς ὀλίγιστον χρόνον ἐπιζῇ, ſhould live as little a while as may be.

* *L.* ii. *de Legibus p.* 661.

Which demonſtrates again the incomparable love of God, in revealing thoſe things to us which are ſo neceſſary for the ſecuring and promoting our preſent happineſs in this World. Where, as we could not be ſafe without the belief of a Life to come; ſo this alone is ſufficient to make the whole World moſt happy, if it were deeply planted in it. We are infinitely therefore indebted to the Almighty goodneſs for making this ſo certain. For this World would be a place full of nothing but confuſion, diſorder and miſchief, were not the evill inclinations of men over-ruled by a belief of ſomething to follow in another life. This reſtrains them from thoſe outrages, which their power many times inables them to commit with impunity while they are here. Their bold and violent ſpirits are check'd and curb'd, whenſoever they think there

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is a greater Lord then they, who will call them to an account. Bleſſed be God therefore, we have all reaſon to ſay, who hath ſo evidently demonſtrated there is a Life to come, after we go from hence; and, by the reſurrection of *Chriſt Jeſus* from the dead, aſſured us he hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteouſneſs. This belief not onely reſtrains men from doing evill, but, which is much more, will even force them to doe well. It alone is ſufficient, as I ſaid, to make the World happy, did we throughly entertain it. Let a man but believe ſtedfaſtly there is a Life to come in another world, and you need not inſtruct him how to behave himſelf here. That one Principle will teach him to make an exact difference between good and evill; and awaken his Soul to attend to thoſe directions which he finds there, for the regulating his actions towards God and man. And this it doth with ſuch a force, that as a man cannot be ignorant, if he think of this, what he ought to doe on all occaſions; ſo neither his naturall propenſion to ſin, nor his evill cuſtoms, nor corrupt doctrines, nor the common received faſhions among men, nor meanneſs of parts, nor multitude of buſineſs,

nor

nor the conceived difficulty of Religion, will be able to hinder that man from doing as he ought, whoſe breaſt is poſſeſſed with the thoughts of immortall life. Neither nobility nor meanneſs of birth, riches nor poverty of eſtate, freedom nor ſervitude of condition, thirſt of glory nor fear of contempt, the praiſe of ſome nor the ſcorn of others, the company of our equals nor the commands of ſuperiours, no gain, no loſs, nothing that we deſire, nothing that we dread, can ſtand before the force of this ſingle argument, if it be ſettled in the heart. For the love of life it ſelf, which is the firſt of all goods that we receive, and the laſt of all that we loſe, is overcome by this, and ſubmits to the diſpoſall of this Eternity of life. So that this is an Univerſall Medicine to purge us of all vicious humours, to ſtrengthen and fortifie our Nature, and to revive and comfort the moſt languiſhing and fainting ſpirits. It is an Engine ſtrong enough to remove the moſt ponderous impediments that lie in our way; an unanſwerable reaſon for any duty; and ſuch a demonſtration, as not onely perfectly ſatisfies our mind, but, being once ſeated there, will never go out again.

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The truth of this will be apparent to those that consider,

1. That *this Motive alone contains all other whatsoever in it:* there being more in these two words, ETERNALL LIFE, then kingdoms, and thrones, and treasures, and glory, and joy, and a thousand such like words can express. By which we may judge what force there is in that to make us doe well, in which the strength of all other arguments, from greatness, honour, riches, pleasure, to engage our affections, are concentred and united. There is as vast a difference therefore between this and all other perswasives to the will, as between the beams of the Sun when they are gathered in a glass, which set all combustibles that approach them on fire; and the same beams scattered and dispersed in the air, when they work onely by their single virtue. By reason of which excellency it is, that it meets with every man's desires, and hath something in it agreeable to his hopes. And to every one of those men of different desires, it presents also every thing: So that the ambitious, for example, hath the greatest glory and honour set before

his eyes to invite him to it; with the addition of pleasure, joy, peace, and all other desirable goods. Whereby it breaks the force of all temptations which would divert us from piety; or rather heightens and lifts up our minds above them, as things inconsiderable. For, a man's Spirit being naturally formed into a likeness of the objects with which he is conversant, his Mind who hath his thoughts in heaven necessarily becomes great and heavenly; and is inspired with such a generous and divine sense, that he is not moved with the solicitations of these little things here, but overlooks them all, as much below him. He is made sublime and truly noble by frequent conversation with so great a Good; and scorns to stoop to the lure of those temptations, which have such power upon earthly souls.

2. For such is the force of this motive, it is manifest from hence, that (as I discoursed in the beginning) *it speaks to the whole man*, and leaves no part of him untouched and unsatisfied. The Understanding cannot say it is not satisfied with seeing, nor the Will that it is not satisfied with loving, nor the Affections that they are

are not filled with joy, nor any part of man complain that it wants a share in this Eternall life. For even the Body, we saw, shall partake of the glory that shall be revealed, and be much improved in strength, and beauty, and agility, and durableness; being made incorruptible. So that while other, petty goods, do onely still the craving of one desire, (and that but for a little time,) leaving the rest discontented; this intirely and at once quiets all, and brings in an universall fulness; being the very life of God himself. It is desirable therefore upon its own account and for it self alone; there being nothing beyond it (as there is in other goods) for which we should desire it. We intend by the gaining of any thing here, to come to the possession of some other good. But it is not so in our desires of Eternall Life; which being the last and chiefest Good, our thoughts naturally rest and repose themselves, when they come there, and seek no farther. There our hearts settle, and no longer rove up and down in uncertainty after every thing we fansie. For the hope of it gives us a full contentment within our selves; and thereby preserves us from a needless pursuit of this and the other enjoyment;

and leaves us little else to doe, but to secure the inheritance of so great a Blessednes.

3. And that we cannot miss, if we keep it in our thoughts: for so great is the efficacy of this Good, that *it cannot be refused.* It is not in our power to set it at nought, (as we may do other things, which have something greater then themselves to be their competitors in our affections;) because it is a Good so excellent, that there is none above it, or equal to it. It will not let us so much therefore as deliberate (when we attend to it) whether we will have it or no; but forces it self upon us on any terms or conditions whatsoever. And can there be a greater motive to doe well then this; which not onely baffles all temptations, and quiets the heart so that it need not gad abroad after every little thing in this world; but also quite takes away all liberty to reject it, and leaves us no power to chuse whether or no we will embrace it? Answer me in your own thoughts; What is there more perswasive then that, which we can have no will at all, if we mind it, to deny? Such is the condition of *Eternall Life*, which inclines

inclines the will, just as a talent doth the scales, when there is nothing but air in the contrary balance, without any the least hovering or deliberation which way to turn. And were it alway present to us, it would wholly deprive us of all our liberty to doe otherwise then it would have us. By reason indeed of its being in expectation hereafter, and that it becomes sensible to us now onely by serious thoughts, a strong and lively faith, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; the will of man retains a liberty, (which while this Good is before him he is quite despoiled of,) whereby he too often chuses other things before this Eternall life. But were it not for this, he could not chuse but embrace it intirely: which sufficiently manifests the force of it in its own nature, if we will but be at the pains, by consideration, faith, and prayer for the Holy Spirit of God, to bring it into frequent view and set it before us. And what is there imaginable of greater efficacy to move us to such constant diligence to bring it near to our hearts then this, that when we see it, our wills have no power to be indifferent, either to it, or the well-doing which leads unto it. Nay, I may adde this; So great is the

force of this argument, that, though one, by the absence of it some time from our thoughts can make it possible we should perish; yet the Will, being mightily affected with its presence, doth not onely love it, but lays its commands upon the mind also to inquire and advise more seriously about the way to attain it at last, by preserving a constant sense of it at present. It hath no list to part with so great a Good; and therefore excites the Understanding to find out the means to keep and maintain a lively apprehension of it, and requires it to be carefull and diligent in the continuall use of those means.

4. And truly it is such a Good (by which also you may judge how forcible a motive it is) as *makes all means whatsoever, whereby we may attain it, lovely and desirable.* There is no Rule more known then this, that the End we design prevails with us to love those Means, which we would not love for themselves. As the hope of having our health restored, makes bitter pills and distastfull potions go down well enough. But what is there, except perhaps the desire of saving our lives, which will render every thing what-

whatsoever acceptable? It is the privilege of this Good alone, to dispose a man to refuse nothing, no not death it self, that he may enjoy it. It commands over all the evill things in this world, as well as over the good; and makes a man willing to endure the one, as well as turn away from the invitation of the other. It makes the greatest *ends* a man hath in this world to submit to serve as *means* to bring us to it. And what will you imagine of greater virtue then that, which will be received by all means? Suppose a man should be content to lose his pleasures and recreations, and health too, for the getting riches; which is all he aims at while he lives: but see here a Good which will make him willing to lose them too, for so glorious a purchace. Or suppose a man will chuse to lose all his worldly goods which he hath got, that he may preserve his liberty, and not be inslaved: here is a greater Good still, which will dispose a man to kiss his cords or his chains, and sing, like *Paul* and *Silas*, in the innermost prison. Or suppose again, that, to save his life, a man should embrace the chains and fetters which tie him fast to his oar: here is something still beyond this, which is the onely thing that

can make a man chearfully ſacrifice his life; for the loſs of which nothing elſe can make him any recompence. The reaſon is, becauſe there is no proportion between this and all other things, either as to greatneſs, or goodneſs; not ſo much as between a Kingdom and a barly-corn.

5. And therefore I may adde, that it *will make us in love with all piety at once*; and with all the means leading to it, though never ſo troubleſome. It doth not work upon us after the way of Art, but as Nature it ſelf doth. It doth not teach us vertue and godlineſs by little parcels, as a Statuary firſt forms one part of his ſtatue, and then another, now working on the face, and then on the hands or feet; but inſtills it altogether in the whole maſs, (as I may ſo ſpeak,) and works in us ſuch an univerſall love to goodneſs, as to have a ready will preſently to doe whatſoever God would have us. Juſt as you ſee the ſpirit of Nature or a particular Soul work in the formation of the body of a plant, or of an animall in the womb; which it begins in all its proportions together, and ſo proceeds on ſtill to bring the parts to a greater bigneſs and ſtrength: even ſo doth this

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mighty Good operate when it touches the heart, not inclining it first to the grace of temperance, and then by another touch to the grace of charity, and after that by a third to the grace of contentedness, &c. but at once begets an hearty love to universall goodness, and forms the whole body of Christian Vertues all together; which grow up after the same manner all alike, there being the same power inspiring us unto all. Which may spare me the labour of shewing what a Motive it is to inforce the practice of every particular Vertue. Which it makes easie also; because this one thing, which is the reason for all, is easily kept in our mind. *Eternall Life* is like a short Sentence, which contains in it the pith and strength of a long Discourse: or like unto a little Leaven, which infuses it self into the whole mass wherewith it is mixed. And it makes all Divine graces intire and perfect also. For where the mind is once impregnated with it, and it hath begun a Divine life there, it will never produce a monstrous birth. No limb of the New man, if I may so speak, shall here be wanting. It will not suffer us, I mean, to be defective in any part of true piety; nor shall one part draw all the

the nourishment to it, and overgrow the rest. It will not let us spend our zeal about some particulars, while we are cold and remiss in other Christian duties; but make us equally affected and spirited unto all. From whence likewise arises another benefit; that while, by the thoughts of this, we excite our selves to any one grace, we promote our growth also in every one. When we stir up our selves to the practice of our present duty, we are disposed thereby to the like chearfull obedience on any other emergent occasion. When we call up our Souls by this to doe God's will, it impowers us also (though we should not then think of it) to suffer what he would have us. And while we animate our selves hereby to suffer one thing, it enables us to doe and suffer all.

O the power of this Divine Good, if it once seat it self in the very throne of our hearts! How it makes them beat with the love of God, and with the love of our neighbour! How it inspires us with resolution, with confidence, with zeal, with joy, with all other pious affections! It will let us scruple none of God's Commands, because it is of equall force

force to make us submit to all. Neither prophaneness nor hypocrisy, neither listlesness nor despondency, can ever lodge in that heart where this belief is deeply rooted; that God will give to our little short labours here, an immense eternall recompence in the other World.

6. One cannot imagine how it should be otherwise, if we go on to consider once more how naturally *this belief fills our hearts with love* to that blessed God, who is so good as to design us such inconceivable Blessednes; and to his will, as the onely way and means to be partaker of it. We shall easily be perswaded that the Will of him who promises us immortality must needs be the Rule of Goodness. It will never enter into our hearts to suspect, that he who loves us so much can enjoyn us any thing but what is truly good for us. And so our wills and affections will readily bow and stoop to his, without any dispute at all about it.

But I have said too much already about this business, to have any room left for a new argument of the power of this great Good.

IV.

IV.

Let us proceed rather to consider what the matter is, that a Motive in it self so great and so powerfull should have so little power upon mens hearts, to move them to vertue and goodness. One may justly wonder at it, and ask, What is the cause that men are so dull, so sluggish, so backward to doe well, since the reward is so certain, so transcendent; and it is as certain they will miss of it in any other way but this of vertue and piety? Where is the *Violence* which the holy Gospel speaks of, and which in all reason was to be expected when the Kingdom of heaven was opened? One would have thought, upon the report of so great a Blessedness, men would have throng'd into heaven; and with eager violence striven to thrust in themselves before others into such preferment as was offered them in our Saviour's Kingdom. His Disciples, sure, thought that men could not chuse, when they heard such news, but all flock to his fold, and prepare themselves to receive his blessing. And there have been those* who have fancied the Apostles were so possessed with these thoughts, that this

* Maldonate *and* de Celada.

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was the reason they were troubled to hear our Saviour say, *whither he went, they could not go*; (that is, at present; xiii. *Joh.* 33.) because they imagined all would run so thick towards the Bliss which he promised, that if they went not to heaven with him then, it was to be questioned whether there would be any room left for them, and all places might not be taken up before they came. And to comfort them, our Saviour, say they, bid them *not be troubled, for in his father's house were many Mansions*: (xiv. 1, 2.) that is, there was room for all comers, though never such multitudes. The discourse indeed of our Saviour there shews that this is but a fancy: yet if we consider the haste men make in any other advantageous offers, and how they will strive to prevent and circumvent one another, to gain any preferment here in this world; they might well think that men would come in as great crowds to heaven, as we have seen them sometime come to Church; and would all run as men do in a race, contending earnestly who should carry away the crown. For *bonorum quorundam, sicut & malorum, est intolerabilis magnitudo*; the greatness of some goods, as well as of some evills, is so

so excessive and intolerable, (as *Tertullian*, if I forget not, somewhere speaks,) that it weighs down all that can be cast into the scale against it; and suffers not our wills, as you have heard, to deliberate about it. Whence is it then that we see so little care and concern about that *far more exceeding eternall weight of glory*? that good which is so vast, that in this state we cannot bear the very thoughts of it? In stead of that forwardness which might have been expected, there is a strange backwardness so much as to think of these things. A prodigious numness and stupidity hath seized on the hearts of Christian people, who seem to have no life at all in them. To what shall we impute it, seeing the Sun of righteousness hath shone so brightly and strongly on them, with these chearfull beams of Eternall Life, which he hath brought to light through his Gospell?

Is there any thing here that can pretend to vie with the *Eternall Life* he hath revealed? I will not stay for an Answer, the disparity is so great between this and all other goods. What is it then which makes men so indifferent? Is there little or no hope that God will bestow such great

great and glorious things, upon ſuch vile wretches as we are? No; he hath *promiſed*, and *prepared* them, as you have heard; and he cannot be worſe then his word, nor loſe all his own preparations. What is it then that ſtifles their endeavours after this immortall bliſs? Will he not give it but upon very hard terms, and ſuch rigorous conditions as are enough to freez the warmeſt reſolutions, when we think of them? Not this neither: For he hath prepared theſe good things *for thoſe that love him*. And what is there more eaſie, what more pleaſant and chearfull then love? eſpecially of the firſt and chiefeſt Good? which will certainly make all our duty as eaſie and delightfull as it ſelf is. Or will you ſay, that we cannot love him; it is an impoſſible Condition? For ſhame conſider, that the very offer of ſuch glorious things is enough to make us love him intirely, if we did believe them. Were we perſwaded that he will beſtow upon good men ſuch happineſs with himſelf, ſo great, ſo long; it would inflame our hearts with the moſt ardent paſſion towards his ſervice. Therefore I have already named the true cauſe of all mens coldneſs and ſloth. After all our ſearch, we ſhall find it nothing elſe but this,

this, They do not believe. They are not perſwaded of the certainty of the rewards in the other World, or have not fixed this belief in their Minds: for if they had, it would not eaſily ſlip out again. They are moved ſtrongly by what they ſee with their eyes, and feel with their hands, and taſte with their tongues; but faith hath little or no place or power in their hearts. This is proved to be too true by the lives of men; which are ſo baſe and unworthy, as if they did not hope for the happineſs of a fly in the other World.

Therefore every one of our buſineſs muſt be, to awaken that faith in our Souls which we profeſs; that Divine principle, which is of ſuch force as to overcome the World. For it is manifeſtly true, which the Apoſtle writes, that *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.* We ſhall never doe any thing worthy of him, unleſs we believe that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him. As, on the contrary, it is no leſs manifeſt that, if we do believe, we ſhall not onely pleaſe him, but we ſhall pleaſe our ſelves in doing ſo, and find it moſt delightfull to be religious. It will marvellouſly inliven us, and infuſe, as it were,

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a new ſpirit and ſoul into us: ſo that we ſhall differ as much from our ſelves, as the corn doth when it is ſown in the ground, and when it ſhoots up again in all its verdure and beauty. It will make us adorn our ſelves, I mean, with all the fruits of righteouſneſs; and beget in us ſuch a ſpirituall life, as will fructify and increaſe in all good works.

And here conſider, *firſt*, That the things themſelves propounded to our belief are ſuch, as we cannot but deſire it ſhould be true, that God intends to beſtow them on us. Who is there that would not willingly live for ever? that doth not think Immortality the greateſt prerogative of humane Nature? provided we may live always in joy and pleaſure, in uninterrupted contentments, and never-fading delights. Though they ſhould be leſs then our Lord hath promiſed, there is no heart but above all things wiſhes to be ſo happy. To ſee onely the beautifull orders of the heavenly hoſts, the glorious Company of the Apoſtles, the goodly Society of the Prophets, the noble Army of Martyrs, the venerable Quire of Paſtors, the whole multitude of holy men and women, who celebrate a

perpetuall feast of joy; to live in happy friendship with them, to love them, and to be beloved of them; to bear a part in their eternall Song of praise and thanks to God; how desirable is it above any thing that we can fansy in this world? No man hath so little love to himself, as not to wish he might be numbred among those Saints in glory everlasting. It's impossible we should not be pleased with the thoughts of having a consortship in such an incomparable happiness; were we but perswaded that it is not a dream, but a reall truth. There needs nothing more to bring it into all mens favour, but onely to be satisfied that there is such an Happiness.

And that's the *other* thing I would propound to your thoughts; That as we naturally desire such an Happiness, so, if we consider the evident demonstrations we have of it in the Gospell, this and a great deal more appears to be the undoubted inheritance of all good Souls; who shall *see God*, and *be with our Lord*, and *behold his glory*. Which wonderfully recommends the Christian Religion to us; wherein we are gratified in our most important desires, and have those things made sure and certain to us which

which we would all fain have for our portion. For what is the generall intent of the Goſpell, but to diſcover to mankind immortall life, and the way to it? This was the great end of our Saviour's appearing; who brought that glimmering light that was in mens minds, of the other world, to a more perfect day. And upon this errand the Apoſtles were ſent, as you have heard, *to call men to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 14. Which made the *Jews* ſo unexcuſable that they *would not come unto our Lord, that they might have life*; (v. *Joh.* 40.) though there was the greateſt reaſon in the world to believe this Record, that *God hath given us Eternall life; and this life is in his Son.*

A *voice* from heaven, I have ſhewn you, often teſtified as much: and ſo did the *Holy Ghoſt*, which deſcended on our Saviour at his baptiſm; and the many *ſigns* and *wonders* whereby God the Father *ſealed him*, and ſet, as it were, his mark, ſtamp and character upon him; that all might know who he was, and believe his word as undoubtedly, as if they heard God the Father himſelf ſpeaking to them continually with his own voice out of heaven. From thence our Saviour came, it was

apparent; and therefore did not pretend to diſcover things of which he had no certain knowledge, but onely revealed that happy Country from whence he deſcended. So he profeſſes to a very wiſe man among the *Jews*, who was convinced, by his many Miracles, that he was a Teacher come from God; iii. *Joh.* 2. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, We ſpeak that we do know, and teſtify that we have ſeen:* ver. 11. For as he came down from heaven; (as he farther tells him ver. 13.) ſo at that very moment he was there, and had a moſt intimate familiarity and communication therewith: and therefore might well ſay, he *had ſeen* the things he reported from thence. What they were, you may reade in the following verſes, 15, 16. *That whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life*, &c.

The very ſame, as I have likewiſe ſhewn, *John Baptiſt* teſtified, ver. 36. And ſo did *Moſes* and *Elias*; who appeared in glory, and diſcourſed with him concerning his return to the other world, after he had done the will of God here. ix. *Luke* 30, 31. At that time our Saviour was *transfigured*, (an evident token

token of the glorifying even of our bodies in the other ſtate,) as three perſons of integrity witneſs; who *ſaw his glory*, and the two men that ſtood with him, ver. 32. and were themſelves overſhadowed with a bright cloud, (an emblem of the glory to come in another World,) and ſo raviſht with the ſight, that they wiſht they might always remain in that happy place. Neither was this onely a ſudden tranſport; but it made ſuch a laſting impreſſion upon their minds, that ever after they lookt upon it as a notable proof of the majeſty and glory of our Saviour. 2 *Pet.* i. 16, 17. And ſo did the ancient Chriſtians; as appears by the *Syriack* Tranſlatour of the New Teſtament, who before the Epiſtle of St. *James* takes notice, that now follow the Epiſtles of the *three* Diſciples before whom our Lord was transfigured.

This we are to mark diligently, and take it for an eminent token of the glory to which our Lord was to go, and which he ſhould be able to give. For it relies upon the report of thoſe who were perſons of known worth, and uprightneſs of heart; who had no deſign in the world to ſerve, but onely to promote ſuch an

important truth, of which they were fully assured. They appeal to all that had any acquaintance with them, whether ever they saw or had reason to suspect any false or double dealing in them; and had not rather been witnesses of their honesty and simplicity in the whole course of their Ministry. *For we are not, as many,* saith St. *Paul* 2 *Cor.* ii. 17. καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, *that sell the word of God,* and make merchandize of it to inrich themselves thereby: (such might not stick *to corrupt* God's word, as we render it, and mix their own dreams with it:) *but with all sincerity, as men who are authorized by God, and have him before our eyes, to whom we must give an account of our actions, we publish the Gospell of Christ.* Whom they accounted it a great *mercy* and favour from God to serve. And *therefore having received this ministry,* (saith he iv. 1, 2.) *we are not sluggish* in doing our duty, nor do we perform it in a base unworthy manner; but have so *renounced,* or thrust away far from us, all secret devices of inriching our selves, that we do not blush to think of our designs: (for τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς αἰσχύνης are such practices as for mere shame men hide and cover, pretending, for instance, onely the good

good of Souls, when they intend nothing but to get their money:) *nor do we walk in craftiness*, appearing one thing and being another; *nor corrupt the word of God*, by mixing any of our own inventions with it; but in a free, open and plain manner *we commend our selves to all mens consciences, as having God looking on us.* All that know us cannot but approve us; (if they be not led by passion more then reason;) and if they do not, God doth. This he repeats again, *Chap.* vi. where he gives a proof of their sincerity, in the exercise of their Ministry, from these two things; *first*, that they got nothing by it, but many afflictions; and *then*, that they did nothing but good to others, in recompence for all the trouble they gave them. Of the former he speaks ver. 4, 5. of the second, ver. 6, 7. and then returns to the other again. Which argument he handles also at large towards the conclusion of the same Epistle, xi. 23, 24, &c. and once more xii. 10.

And thus he writes also to the Church of *Thessalonica*, (1 *Thess.* ii. 4.) who knew very well how faithfully they had discharged their trust, and that they did *not accommodate themselves to any man's humour*;

but plainly delivered the meſſage which God had committed to them. No body could ſay that they had *uſed any flattering ſpeeches*, to ſooth them up in a vain conceit of themſelves, (ver. 5.) nor *uſed any colours to hide a covetous deſign:* no, as to their words and addreſſes, the *Theſſalonians* could teſtify the contrary; and as to their mind and heart, which God onely could know, they call him to witneſs, it never entred into their thoughts. Nor did they ſeek *glory and fame* either from them or any body elſe, but deſpiſed it as much as riches: unleſs it were the honour of obliging them, by communicating the bleſſings of the Goſpell to them, and receiving no reward from them: ver. 6. They might indeed have put them to charge, and lived upon their coſt, as other Apoſtles of *Chriſt* did, and that honeſtly too: But He and his companions were among them with more *gentleneſs*; (ver. 7.) they parted, that is, from their own undoubted right, to ſpare the *Theſſalonians:* and as a good nurſe cheriſhes her children; ſo they defrauded themſelves, and took the meat, as we ſpeak, out of their own mouths, for the good of others whom they deſired to breed up in Chriſtian piety. This ſhews the wonderfull

derfull innocency and goodneſs of theſe men, who got nothing by the Goſpell, (no not what they might have lawfully and juſtly taken,) but onely ſtudied how to win Souls to *Chriſt*. In ſhort, he calls *them* and *God* alſo to witneſs, how *holily*, how *juſtly*, how *unblamably* they behaved themſelves among thoſe that believed: ver. 10. The firſt of which words refers to God; the ſecond to thoſe actions which belong to humane ſociety; and the third to thoſe which every man is bound unto ſeverally by himſelf: in none of which could *He*, *Silvanus* and *Timotheus*, be charged with any miſdemeanour. On which argument he once more inſiſts 2 *Tim.* iii. 10, 11. being ſo confident of his unreprovable vertue, that he deſired nothing more of all that knew him, but *to be followers* of him, and *to walk ſo as they had him for an example.* 1 *Cor.* iv. 16. iii. *Phil.* 17.

All which I have the more particularly noted, becauſe it is from theſe men that we receive *the teſtimony of Jeſus*. Who, they aſſure us, choſe to die the moſt ſhamefull death, when he could have avoided it; and with the greateſt con-

confidence, when he was expiring, commended his Spirit into the hands of God. Which is an unqueſtionable argument that he believed, and was aſſured, that he ſhould be with God, when he went from hence, and be able to doe for his followers all that he promiſed. Which they tell us moreover God juſtified, when he raiſed him from the dead, and carried him, in their ſight, up into heaven: and afterward ſent the Holy Ghoſt upon them, to teſtify that he was ſtill alive, and poſſeſſed of an unſeen glory. In which, they alſo tell us, he appeared to ſeverall perſons; as I have already related. One of which was caught up into heaven, and heard ſuch things there as made him wiſh for nothing more, then to leave this earth, and to be with *Chriſt*. To whom the Angels, they alſo aſſure us, witneſſed upon ſeverall occaſions. For they attended him at his birth, and in his life, and when he died, and after his reſurrection, and when he aſcended into heaven: From whence he ſent them many times, as miniſtring Spirits, to his Apoſtles; of which we have very large teſtimonics in the whole book of the *Revelation*.

From

From all which we may ſafely conclude, that there can no other reaſon in the world be given, why any man thus informed ſhould not believe the Goſpell, but onely his own deſperate wickedneſs. For the things propounded therein are moſt deſirable above all other. It reveals ſuch a wonderfull love of God to mankind, that all men would rejoyce to hear the news of it, were they not averſe to thoſe pious and vertuous courſes whereby, they are told, they muſt attain it. Nothing attracts all hearts ſo much as the hope of a bleſſed immortality: which is teſtified to us ſo credibly in the Goſpell, that nothing could make men turn their ears away from it by infidelity, but onely the incurable wickedneſs of their Nature; which will not let them part with thoſe vices, which the Goſpell ſays they muſt quit for ſo great a Good. In one word, there is nothing in this Book but what is ſutable to all mens deſires, ſave onely the holy rule of life: and therefore it can be nothing elſe but their hatred to this, which makes them reject all the reſt. They would follow their nobler appetite after thoſe good things which the Goſpell promiſes, if they had not

not perfectly given up themselves to those baser appetites, which must be denied for their sake. For *if our Gospell be hid*, saith St. *Paul* in the place before mentioned, *it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospell of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4. That which the Gospell reports is as clear as the noon-day. Nothing can be more visible then the φωτισμος τῦ εὐαγγελίυ τῆς δόξης τῦ Χρις῀, *the light* or the *splendour of the Gospell of the glory of Christ.* By which, saith *Theophylact*, the Apostle means the belief of these great Truths, *that Jesus was crucified, that he was received up into heaven, and that he will give future rewards.* This is the φωτισμὸς *splendour* the Apostle speaks of, which if any man do not see, after such evident demonstrations of these things, it is his wickedness hinders him. And such men, after they have long resisted the light, fall under the power of the Devil so inevitably, that he blinds their eyes. Mark, as St. *Chrysostom* observes, that the Scripture calls severall things by the name of a *God*, not from their own worth and excellence, but

ἀπὸ τῆς ἀσθενείας τῶν ὑποπιπτόντων, from the weakneſs of thoſe who are ſubject to them. Thus *Mammon* is the God of ſome, and *the belly* the God of others, and *the Devill* the God of all ſuch perſons; becauſe they are baſely inſlaved to the love of mony, and of their fleſhly appetite, and He rules and governs them as abſolutely as if he were their God. Yet he hath no power quite to blind their eyes, as he farther obſerves, before they diſbelieve that which is ſo credibly reported by ſuch Divine arguments: for, as the very words of St. *Paul* are, *he blinds the minds of them that believe not.* γέγονεν ἄπιστοι δι' ἑαυτὸς, they became infidels of themſelves; and having given themſelves over to unbelief, againſt ſuch miraculous evidence of the truth of the Chriſtian Faith, God gives them over to him: to whoſe ſervice they have ſo ſlaviſhly devoted themſelves, that they cannot be recovered; but, as they deſerve, muſt unavoidably *periſh.*

From which miſerable condition let all thoſe who are inclined to infidelity take care to ſave themſelves, by timely conſidering thoſe Divine demonſtrations which theſe holy men of God have reported to us;

us; who beheld our Saviour's glory, *the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* i. *Joh.* 14. Upon which words hear what the ſame eloquent Biſhop writes; who thus ſumms up a great part of the evidence we have for the Chriſtian belief.

S. Chryſoſtom. *Hom.* xii. *in Johan.*

The Angels appeared in great glory upon the earth to Daniel, David and Moſes; but they appeared as ſervants, as thoſe that had a Maſter. It is the peculiar glory of our Saviour, that he appeared as a Lord, as having power over all: and though in a poor and vile faſhion, yet even in that the Creation knew its Lord and Maſter. A Star from heaven called the Wiſe men to worſhip him. A great company of Angels often attended him, and ſang his praiſes. To whom others ſucceeded, who publiſhed his glory, and delivered this ſecret Myſtery one to another: the Angels to the Shepherds; and the Shepherds to thoſe in the city; and Gabriel to Mary and Elizabeth; and Anna and Symeon to thoſe in the Temple. Nor were men and women onely tranſported with the pleaſure; but an infant that had not ſeen the light leapt in its mother's womb: and all were ſtrangely lifted up in hopes of what was a-coming.

Theſe

These things all fell out straightway after his birth. But when he appeared in the World, there were more Miracles, and greater then the former, appeared again. For not so little as a Star and the Heavens, not Angels or Archangels, not Gabriel or Michael, but the Father himself proclaimed him from heaven; and with the Father, the Comforter came down with a voice, and remained on him. And therefore well might the Apostle say, We have seen his glory, the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father. *And not by these things alone, but by those which followed after. For now not merely Shepherds, and an aged Prophetess, and reverend men, published the glad tidings of the Gospell; but the voice it self of the things he did, louder then the sound of any trumpet; which was heard presently every-where. For the fame of him, saith the Evangelist, went into all Syria; and revealed him to all, and cried every-where that the King of heaven was come to men. For Dæmons every-where fled and got away; and the Devill departed; and Death began to give place, and not long after quite vanished; and all manner of infirmities were loosed; and the tombs dismissed the dead; the Dæmons left those that were mad, and Diseases those that were sick.*

Wonder-

Wonderfull and ſtrange things were to be ſeen, which the Prophets deſired to ſee, and did not. For one might have ſeen eyes new made, paralytick limbs ſtrengthened, motion given to withered hands and lame feet, ears that were ſtopt up opened, and the tongues of the dumb looſed. In one word, like an excellent workman that comes into an houſe which is decayed and rotten by time, he repaired, or re-built rather, humane Nature.

For who can tell how he made the Souls of men new, which is a greater wonder then all the reſt? For the wills of men oppoſe their cure, which the body doth not. They will not yield, we ſee, no, not to God himſelf. And yet theſe were reformed by him; and all kind of wickedneſs expelled. Nor were they onely freed from Sin; but, like the bodies to which he gave the beſt habit after he had cured their diſeaſes, they were advanced to the higheſt degree of vertue. A Publican became an Apoſtle. A perſecutour, a blaſphemer, a reproacher of Chriſtianity, turned the Preacher of the Word. A thief was made a Citizen of Paradiſe: and a ſtrumpet became illuſtrious by a great faith. And abundance of others, worſe then theſe, were liſted in the number of the Diſciples,

Diſciples, till whole cities and countries were ſtrangely reformed by the Goſpell. Who is able to declare the wiſedom of his Precepts, the vertue of his heavenly Laws, the excellent order of his Angelicall Converſation? For he hath taught us ſuch a life, he hath given us ſuch laws, and inſtituted ſuch a polity; that they who uſe them, though before the worſt of men, ſtraightway become Angels, and like to God, according to our power. The Evangeliſt therefore recollecting all theſe things, the Miracles he wrought upon mens bodies, upon their Souls, and upon the elements; the Precepts, the ſecret Gifts, the Laws, the Polity, the power of perſwaſion, the future Promiſes; his Sufferings; he pronounced this wonderfull lofty voice, We beheld his glory, the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

For they did not admire him onely for his Miracles, but for his Sufferings. As for example, becauſe he was nailed to a Croſs and ſcourged; becauſe he was beaten; becauſe he was ſpit upon; becauſe thoſe buffeted him, to whom he had been a benefactour: upon the account even of theſe, which ſeem moſt ſhamefull, that voice is worthy to be repeated again; becauſe he himſelf hath

called this a Glory. For then Death was deſtroyed, the Curſe was diſſolved, Dæmons were put to ſhame, and he triumphed over them openly, and the hand-writing of ſins, or obligation to puniſhment, was nailed to the Croſs and cancelled. And beſides theſe wonders, which were inviſible, there were others apparent unto all; which ſhewed he was the onely-begotten Son of God, and the Lord of all the Creation. For while his bleſſed body yet hung upon the Croſs, the Sun withdrew its beams, the earth was aſtoniſhed and wrapt in darkneſs, the ground ſhook, the tombs were broke open, a great many dead people walkt out of their graves, and went into the City, the ſtone upon his grave was rolled away, and he aroſe. He that was crucified, he that was faſtned with nails to the croſs, he that was dead aroſe; and filling his Apoſtles with great power, ſent them to all the World, as the common phyſicians of humane Nature, the rectifiers of mens lives, the ſowers of the knowledge of heavenly Doctrine, the looſers of the Devill's tyranny, the teachers of the great and hidden Goods, the preachers of the glad tidings of the immortality of the Soul, the Eternall life of the body, and the rewards which (as they paſs all underſtanding, ſo) never have any end.

Theſe

These and many more such like this blessed man beholding, (which he knew, but was not able to write, because the world could not have contained the Books,) he cried out, We beheld his glory, the glory as of the onely-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. *Who is now as able, I may adde, to give us new bodies, and inconceivably-improved Souls, and then to perpetuate the happiness of both in heaven; as he was to cure diseases, and raise dead bodies, and purify mens minds, when he was here on earth.*

Let our conclusion therefore, as he says elsewhere, *be suitable to our discourse. And what's so suitable as Doxologies and giving glory to God, in such manner as is worthy of him? Not by our words onely, that is, but much more by our deeds. So our Saviour himself exhorts us, saying,* Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heaven. *For there is nothing more bright and shining then an excellent conversation, as one of the wise men hath said;* The ways of the just shine like the light. *And they shine not onely to those that light their lamps by their works, but to all that are near unto them.* Hom. xiii. p. 607. 5.

Therefore let us pour oyl continually into theſe lamps, that the flame may riſe higher, and the light ſhine more abundantly.

Id. p. 611. *Having received ſuch grace and truth by Jeſus Chriſt, let us not grow the lazier by the greatneſs of the gift. For the greater honour hath been done us, the more we are bound to excell in vertue. Let that therefore be our buſineſs, to purify our ſelves ſo throughly, that, being thought worthy to ſee Chriſt, we may not at that Day be delivered over to the ſevere tormenting powers, but to thoſe that are able to bring us to the inheritance in heaven, which is prepared for thoſe that love him. Which God grant we may all obtain, through the grace and loving-kindneſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

A farther improvement of this RECORD.

THE grounds of Chriſtian belief, you ſee, are not ſo ſlender, but I may take the confidence to ſay, that he who will be at the pains to conſider ſuch things as theſe, cannot any longer think it a piece of wit to be an infidel. It is rank folly, as well as baſeneſs; there being no reaſon in the earth to except againſt theſe Witneſſes, and to deny the Faith of *Chriſt* an entrance into our minds and hearts. For what we know, as I have ſhewn in the former Book, by credible report, is as certain as what we ſee and hear with our eyes and ears. And what can be better atteſted then the holy Goſpell? Which is juſtly called *the teſtimony of God*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 1. and *the teſtimony of Chriſt*, i. 6. Becauſe God teſtified theſe things to us as his will, by his Son *Chriſt*; and *Chriſt* teſtified them to us by the holy Ghoſt. For ſo St. *Paul* ſaith in the place laſt named, (ver. 5, 6.) the

Corinthians were *inriched* by our Lord *with every gift; even as the teſtimony of Chriſt was confirmed*, or eſtabliſhed to be a truth, *among them.*

After which mighty evidence, whereby we are aſſured God intends to beſtow ſo great a bleſſing on us as immortall Life, it is of no weight whatſoever can be objected againſt this Doctrine; particularly, againſt that part of it which concerns the Reſurrection of the body, at the laſt day. For that Great Lord who ſaid it, we are certain, can perform it. He knew his own power; and would not have ſaid, *I will raiſe you up at the laſt day*, unleſs he had been able to make his word good. He hath alſo already fulfilled his word in other things, which he foretold, though no body would believe him till they ſaw it; which is a good ground, as St. *Gregory Nyſſen* obſerves *, to expect this, though it ſeem never ſo difficult, and incredible, had he not promiſed it. "Suppoſe, ſaith he, that an husbandman, "diſcourſing of the virtue of Seeds, ſhould "not be believed by a by-ſtander, that "had never been bred in the country, "nor ſeen any thing of that nature: "would it not be ſufficient for his ſatiſ-

* *De opificio hominis cap.* xxv.

"faction,

"faction, to take but one ſingle grain "out of an heap of corn, and to tell him "he ſhould ſee in that the virtue of all "the reſt? For he that ſees one grain of "wheat or barly caſt into the ground, "coming up after ſome time a full ear, "will never doubt of the fruitfulneſs of "all the reſt of the ſame kind. Even juſt "ſo, ſaith he, it ſeems to me a ſufficient "teſtimony of the Reſurrection, that the "truth of other things, which he fore-"told, cannot be denied. In them we "have an experiment, whereby we may "judg of every thing elſe that he hath ſaid.

But to demand that every thing ſhould be made out by reaſon, before we receive it, is to make us *Philoſophers*, not *Chriſtians*; whoſe name is *Believers*. And beſides, the beſt Philoſophers cannot tell us how the Corn, I now mentioned, grows up from a little Seed caſt into the ground, or a Man from ſo ſmall a beginning in his mother's womb; or any thing conſiderable of the manner how all naturall productions are performed. And therefore what folly is it to reſolve not to be ſatisfied, unleſs we ſhew how a dead body can be raiſed? It is ſufficient to know that *idoneus eſt reficere qui fecit*, as *Tertul-*

lian ſpeaks in this caſe; He that made it at firſt is able to make it again. It being more, as he goes on, to make, then to re-make; to give a beginning to a thing, then to reſtore it after it is diſſolved. And we have this alſo to ſatisfy us; that multitudes ſaw our Saviour raiſe men from the dead, and by other miraculous works demonſtrate, that he wants not power to doe any thing he hath promiſed. His word may well be taken for any thing to come, who hath already done ſuch wonders as are credibly reported to us, by thoſe that were ſpectatours of them, in the Goſpell.

[1] Greg. Nyſſ. *ibid.*

"And it is very remarkable how he "deals with us as a Mother doth with "her Child: into whoſe tender mouth "ſhe firſt thruſts her breaſt to nouriſh it "with milk; and when the teeth come, "gives it bread; and when it is grown "ſtronger, feeds it with ſolid meat. E- "ven ſo our Bleſſed Lord διὰ τῆ κατολί- "γων τῆς θαυμαλοποιίας ἀρξάμενος, &c. "beginning with lower Miracles at the "firſt, prepares our faith by degrees for "the higheſt. He began with the cure "of deſperate diſeaſes, in which τὸν τῆς "ἀναζάσεως προοιμάζεται δύναμιν, he pre- "faced

" faced to his power of raiſing the dead:
" For that which men thought impoſ-
" ſible, he ſhew'd hereby was not incre-
" dible. Who could have thought, that
" one ſick of a burning fever ſhould be
" made ſo well by ſpeaking a word, as to
" riſe preſently, and miniſter to the com-
" pany? yet *Simon*'s wife's mother was
" an inſtance of this Miraculous power
" in our Saviour. Who added ſomething
" to this Miracle, when he reſtored the
" Nobleman's ſon to health, though he
" was at the point of death, as his
" Father thought: (iv. *Joh.* 47.) and
" this without touching, or coming near
" him. For he did not ſtir from the place
" where he was at *Cana*, and yet ſent life
" to him as far as *Capernaum*, by the ſole
" power of his command. After which
" he proceeded to an higher Miracle; for
" he reſtored another Ruler's daughter to
" life, who died before he came to her
" reſcue. And again he exceeded this
" Miracle, by raiſing up the woman's ſon
" of *Naim*, when he was carrying out to
" be buried. And at laſt (as hath been
" before obſerved) he raiſed his wonder-
" working power ſo high, that he called
" *Lazarus* out of his grave, when he had
" been dead four days.

" Thus

"Thus he raiſes our minds by little "and little to the higheſt pitch of Faith; "to believe, that is, the Reſurrection of "the dead. He teaches us to expect that "in generall, the experiment of which "he hath ſhewn in particulars, For, as "the Apoſtle ſaith, (*1 Theſſ.* iv. 16.) *the* "*Lord ſhall deſcend with a ſhout*, &c. at "the reſtauration of all things, to raiſe "the dead to a ſtate of incorruption: "even ſo now, he that lay in his grave was "awakened *by the voice* of our Saviour's "command, and ſhaking off his corrup-"tion, came whole and ſound out of his "tomb; the bands wherewith his hands "and feet were tied nothing hindring. "Is this nothing to confirm our belief of "the Reſurrection? when we have not "onely our Lord's *word* for it, but, by "thoſe whom he reſtored to life, we "have in *deed* a demonſtration of what "he hath promiſed? What pretence is "there now for unbelief? Why do we "not ſlight all thoſe who by Philoſophy "and vain deceit ſet themſelves againſt a "ſimple faith, and ſtick to this naked "confeſſion, that there will be a reſur-"rection of the body to Eternall Life?

And

And to make our holy belief more acceptable to all Christian Souls, let me briefly adde, That Faith being as certain a way of knowing as any other, Believers must needs be the most knowing men in the world. Which is a very great motive to Faith; whereby we are informed of a great many things, and those the most excellent, of which other mens minds are perfectly ignorant. It gives a new light to the Soul, whereby to see things invisible. There is no less then a whole world of things that Believers are acquainted withall, which are hid from their eyes who remain in darkness, by continuing in unbelief. While the thoughts of such Souls are confined within the narrow bounds of this visible world, and know but little of it neither; the Minds of Believers are inlarged beyond the limits of all things seen, to behold another and far more glorious world: in which *Jesus* is the Sun, and the *Angels* and Spirits of just men are the Stars, and the brightness of the *Divine Glory* is the Light and splendour. In this the ancient Christians justly made their boast. And there being a company of vain men, who pretended to be Γνω-

σικοὶ

γνωσοι *Knowers*, men of intelligence beyond all others, but indeed unbelievers, *Clemens Alexandrinus* reproves their folly, and tells them, Ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν οἱ ἐν τῷ ἀπιστουμένῳ πιστοὶ, καὶ οἱ ἐν τῷ ἀγνοουμένῳ γνωσοι· *We are they who believe that which is incredible to others; and therefore are they who know that which is unknown to others.*

L. v. Stromat.

None so knowing as they that believe the Goſpell: and therefore let us not ſhut this Faith out of our Souls, and thereby exclude the greateſt Good. Nor let us think our ſelves unhappy, becauſe we do not ſee that which we expect: For this would be to complain of our privilege and preeminence above thoſe that depend merely on Senſe, and will not be wiſe beyond the narrow confines of their eyes. Faith is that divine gift, whereby God raiſes our minds above the pitch of vulgar Souls. He brings us acquainted by this means with the moſt noble and glorious objects, and illuminates us with the moſt comfortable knowledge: without which we ſhall remain, notwithſtanding all our other wiſedom, in a ſad dull night of ignorance and darkneſs.

And

And if this Faith touch our hearts alſo, it will raiſe us to as excellent a temper of ſpirit, and make us truly heavenly and divine. We ſhall feel it altering the very frame of our thoughts, deſigns, and deſires. It will lead us to ſuch a pitch of Vertue, that we ſhall adhere to God and goodneſs whatſoever befalls us; and ſolely depending on his promiſes, truſt our ſelves with him, both when all other things fail us, and when we have the greateſt ſupports that they can lend us. Which is no eaſie thing to fleſh and bloud, as *Philo* * excellently obſerves: (for that inclines us to truſt in riches, and power, and dignity, and friends, and ſtrength of body, and a number of ſuch things:) but μεγάλης καὶ ὀλυμπίου διανοίας ἔργον, the work of a great and heavenly Mind, which cannot be inticed by any thing on earth to rely upon it. An example of which we have in *Abraham*; who believed God and obeyed his voice, when he called him from his own country and his father's houſe, *and he went out not knowing whither he went.* Divers ſuch inſtances there are of the power of divine Faith in him and in others, in the xi. Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews.*

* *L. Quis rerum Divin. hæres, p.* 493.

From

From which we may certainly conclude, that nothing can be too hard for the Faith of *Christ*; which is built upon surer grounds and a stronger foundation then theirs was. It is of such mighty force, I have shewn, that one would think there needs no more to be done to make all the World good; but onely, by such means as I have declared, to implant this Faith in all mens hearts.

But such is the perverseness of humane Nature, that our work is not done, when the judgement is convinced. There must be new arts of insinuation used, by those convictions to awaken and ingage the affections. The Motives are certain and sure, strong and powerfull; but Men are weak and impotent, careless and unconcerned about their own good. After they know how things are, they must be made to consider; left a quickning Motive lie in a dead hand or a cold heart, which draws forth none of its virtue. And there is no way, that I can think of, to stir them up to consideration, but by propounding a few sensibly-affecting Questions to them; which shall be part of the business of this last Chapter.

V.

V.

I. Let him therefore that believes this Record, that God hath given us Eternall Life in his Son *Jesus*, ask himself *what he thinks in his Conscience is the way to this supreme Felicity.* May we live here just as we list, and yet hope hereafter to live with *Christ?* Or can we reasonably think to come to him without any thought about it; and to be received up to his heavenly Kingdom, though we mind nothing now but what we can get in this World? Strange! that Christian people should imagine Piety and Vertue to be things superfluous! and take the mortifying the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, to be nothing else but a piece of Monasticall austerity, and melancholick devotion! a thing which mere black choler and a peevish disposition makes men trouble themselves and the world withall! Are we so blind as to think, that a carefull endeavour after an inoffensive life towards God and towards men is but a precise Nicety; which may be commended in those that have nothing else to doe, but is of no necessity to our living eternally with God?

God? We cannot, ſure, be ſo forſaken of our reaſon. No; nor think that the buſineſs of Religion is onely to hear the word of God, and to be frequently on our knees; and that we need not be ſo ſolicitous how to live and walk in the ways of God's Commandments. What man inſtructed in the Goſpell can be ſo ſenſeleſs, as to think by knocking often at heaven gates to get an entrance, though otherwiſe he ſtands idle? Do the Holy Books inſpire us with any ſuch conceits? Do they tell us ſome holy breath will waft us ſafe over the dangerous Sea of worldly affairs, troubles, pleaſures, and temptations of various kinds? Needs there no labour at the ſails or the oars? no wiſe guidance and ſteerage of the veſſel? no guard and defence againſt pirates? but a man may confidently commit himſelf to the winds, and let his veſſel run whither they will carry it? May he live, I mean, juſt as the courſe of the world hurries him, and as he is driven by the blaſt of outward accidents? ſometimes this way, and ſometimes the quite contrary? in good company and after ſome pathetick exhortations doing well, and then croſſing all again when a new temptation to ſin ſolicits him? Sure

ſuch

ſuch men, as can believe thus, fanſy heaven a void and empty ſpace, where company is wanting; and imagine our Saviour cares not who comes thither, ſo it be but filled. They live as if all the regions above, the glorious Paradiſe of God, were but ſo much waſte ground, which needs a Colony of Planters; it matters not of what quality they are, ſo it be but inhabited. O vile thoughts! that can imagine God wants the company of ſuch as care not for him; and that Heaven, which threw out the Angels that ſinned, will entertain thoſe who joyn with them in their foul rebellion! It is a wonderful grace, that he will invite us on any terms to his moſt bleſſed ſociety. We doe *him* no kindneſs, but *our ſelves*, in ſeeking his heavenly Kingdom. Into which if we will not enter at ſuch a gate as he ſets open; we ſhall be ſhut out, and periſh in our perverſe ingratitude, or fooliſh preſumption.

Conſider, I beſeech you, what do all theſe WITNESSES ſay concerning the way to it? Do they not tell us, that *ſtreight is the gate and narrow the way that leads to life?* vii. *Matt.* 14. that we muſt *ſtrive to enter?* xiii. *Luke* 24. and

that *there ſhall in no wiſe enter into the holy city any thing that defileth?* xxi. *Rev.* 27. and that *without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord?* xii. *Hebr.* 14. Which we muſt therefore excite our ſelves, by his promiſes, *to perfect in the fear of God; having cleanſed our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit.* 2 *Cor.* vii. 1. And *giving all diligence, adde to our faith vertue; and to vertue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godlineſs; and to godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs; and to brotherly kindneſs, charity: For ſo an entrance ſhall be miniſtred to us abundantly into the everlaſting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* 2 *Pet.* i. 5, 6, 7, 11. Examine every one of them, and they will tell you as much. The FATHER, by a voice from heaven, bids us *hear his Son*; who ſays, *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.* vii. *Matt.* 21. And the WORD ſaith, *Bleſſed are they that doe his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.* xxii. *Rev.* 14. *Wherefore as the* HOLY GHOST *ſaith, To day*

day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. iii. *Heb.* 7, 8. This was its language of old; and it was poured alſo on the Apoſtles, *that repentance and remiſſion of ſins* might be preached in our Saviour's name among all nations. xxiv. *Luk.* 47, 49. Which is the end alſo of our being waſhed with WATER in his name: for *we are baptized into his death*; and therefore ought to *reckon our ſelves to be dead indeed unto ſin, but alive unto God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Let not ſin therefore reign in your mortall body, that ye ſhould obey it in the luſts thereof.* vi. *Rom.* 3, 11, 12. For his BLOUD was ſhed, *that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* ii. *Tit.* 14. For which end alſo he was raiſed from the dead, (by the Eternall SPIRIT,) that he might *bleſs us, in turning every one of us from his iniquities.* iii. *Act.* 26. And therefore *this* the APOSTLES *ſay and teſtifie in the Lord, that we henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk.* iv. *Eph.* 17. *For God hath not called us unto uncleanneſs, but unto holineſs. He therefore that deſpiſeth, deſpiſeth not man, but God*; (ſaith St. *Paul*) *who hath alſo given unto us his holy Spirit.* 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 7, 8.

And if I ſhould now ſend you to inquire, and *ask for the old paths*, as *Jeremiah* ſpeaks; would you find that the ancient Chriſtians knew any other way to bliſs then this? Did they, who, *while they were in the fleſh, lived not according to it; who, being upon earth, had their converſation in heaven; whoſe lives excelled the beſt laws and ſtatutes of their ſeverall countries, which they ſtrictly obeyed; who loved all, though perſecuted by all; who bleſſed, when they were curſed; honoured thoſe that treated them deſpitefully; did good to thoſe who puniſhed them as evill doers* *, &c. did theſe men, I ſay, believe that Heaven might be wone onely by their prayers, or by perpetuall diſputing about that Religion which they did not practiſe? How come we then to have ſo great a fondneſs for our ſelves, as to think that *we* ſhall carry that by the name and the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, which *they* could not get without ſo much labour? and to have ſuch cheap thoughts of the Crown of glory, as to imagine it will bow and come down to thoſe idle wiſhes, unto which there is nothing ſo mean in this world but ſcorns to ſtoop?

* *Vid pl. apud Juſtin. Mart. Epiſt. ad Diognet. p. 497.*

That

That one thought is ſufficient to convince us what we have to doe to be happy. I need not ſend you ſo far as thoſe elder times; go but to your ſelves, and enquire how you doe in the affairs of this world. Sure, men never got their eſtates with ſo little care as they hope to get Heaven. Ask a man why he follows his buſineſs ſo cloſe; and he will tell you, that an eſtate is not got by wiſhing: that a family cannot be provided for by lying in bed, or ſitting by the fire-ſide: that there are opportunities, which muſt be narrowly watcht; and cheats, which are not eaſily diſcovered. And yet, to ſee the imprudence and inconſiderateneſs of Mankind! The ſame perſon thinks to go to Heaven, and poſſeſs all the treaſures there, by his Prayers alone; though cold too, and but little obſerved: or by a lame Repentance, which wants its effects: nay, by a death-bed groan, a few forced tears, and promiſes never performed: by ſome ſhort ſnatches of Religion, a careleſs behaviour, and an unwatchfull life. He minds no occaſion of doing or receiving good; is indifferent whether he lay hold of opportunities and good ſeaſons; ſeldom thinks of the place whither he would

go; denies himſelf nothing to which he hath a mind; bridles no appetite; curbs no paſſion; nay, will be drunk for company; and ſwear, rather then be thought ſuch a coward as to ſtand in awe of God, or to want the breeding of a Gentleman; and, in brief, doth not half ſo much upon the account of *Eternall Life*, as many a man does for a ſingle-peny.

What a ſtrange dulneſs is this, to imagine that all ends which we aim at muſt be compaſſed by means proportionable to their greatneſs, but onely the very greateſt and laſt End of all? The Souldier gets not the victory by mere railing at his enemy; but, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Tim.* ii. 3, &c. *endures hardneſs*, and *entangles not himſelf with the affairs of this life*. And it is the *labouring husbandman*, as it there follows, *who partakes of the fruits*. *All things* in the world, as *Solomon* ſaith, *are full of labour*. And do we think that our Souls onely are exempted, and may be ſaved by doing nothing? that Vertue will grow there without our care? or that an eternall harveſt of joy will ſpring up to us, without labouring to doe vertuouſly? It is a great ſhame to ſay it, but ſuch are the hopes of fooliſh men;

men: who are perfectly like the *Iſraelites*, of whom God ſays, x. *Hoſ.* 11. *Ephraim is an heifer that is taught*, to plow; *but loveth* onely *to tread out the corn.* That is, as *D. Kimchi* gloſſes, they were taught the Law, and inſtructed to doe good; but minded nothing elſe, but merely to enjoy the promiſes in a fat and fruitfull Land which God had given them.

Let ſuch remember, for a ſtory ſometimes ſticks longer in their minds then the greateſt reaſon, what a Wiſe man among the *Jews* ſaid to a Friend of his, whom he met exceeding ſad and dejected about ſome affairs which went croſs to his deſigns. "What's the matter, ſaid he, that "thou goeſt ſo heavily? doth any thing "of this world trouble thee? Yes, ſaid "the other. And what haſt thou got, "ſaid the Wiſe man again, by all thy "care, ſolicitude and vexation? Alas! "replied his Friend, thou ſeeſt by my "troubled countenance how little I have "got. Then, ſaid the Wiſe man, conſi-"der; if of this World, which thou haſt "followed with ſuch diligence, thou haſt "got ſo little; what art thou like to get "of the other World, which thou min-"deſt not at all? A very good Medita-

tion for thoſe who, after all their labour and thoughtfulneſs, are like to leave no great matters to their poſterity; and for thoſe whoſe greateſt cunning and induſtry is not able to bring about their ends. And it may lead us to another profitable Meditation, how unequall we are in our dealing, while we lay out ſo many thoughts, and ſo much labour, upon things we are not ſure to obtain; and ſo few and ſo little upon thoſe which, as ſure as God is true, ſhall be the portion of them that diligently ſeek them. The Souldier is not ſure to win the victory, after all the hardſhip he has endured. And the froſt may nip, and the bitter winds blaſt, the laborious Husbandman's faireſt hopes. There is no deſign, ſave onely that we have for Heaven, but, after our beſt diligence, may miſcarry. What madneſs then is it, thus to miſplace our endeavours, by imploying them ſo ſeriouſly about thoſe things which frequently avoid us and fly from us; in the mean time neglecting thoſe of infinite more value, which earneſtly court us, and are deſirous to beſtow themſelves upon us?

But

But there is no need of ſo many words to awaken our thoughts, to judge aright in theſe matters. And yet this is all we have to doe for our Salvation, (when we believe the Goſpell,) to think often what we believe, and expect to receive from the bounty of Heaven.

II. Which if every one did, it might ſpare me the labour of asking again, *whether we think in our conſcience it is any great matter God demands of us, when he bids us, if we will obtain eternall life, obey his will revealed to us by Chriſt Jeſus.* Review the Chriſtian Doctrine, a brief account of which I gave in the former Book; and when you have ſeen all that you are to doe, or to deny and ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, conſider to what it will amount. If we take it comparatively, and caſt it into the ſcales againſt immortall Life and the weight of Glory, it will preſently ſeem ſo little, light and inconſiderable, that we ſhall not think it worth the ſpeaking of. But let us wave that advantage, and onely conſider every thing in it ſelf abſolutely. CHAP. V.

I. What

1. What great matter is it that we find God expects we ſhould doe for him? Had he bid us govern the World, and rule the Nations of the earth; he had ſet us a difficult task indeed: But when he requires us onely to govern our ſelves, to ſet in order our affections, and to ſubdue our unruly paſſions, which give us no ſmall trouble, and expoſe us to great danger; what a reaſonable demand is this? and upon what eaſie terms does he offer Eternall life? We might have complained, if he had but required every one of us to be rich, and to get great eſtates; much more if he had expected we ſhould be Philoſophers, and be able to give an account of the ſecrets of Nature, and reſolve all the queſtions we meet withall about the air and the water and the reſt of the Elements: But when he onely bids us be content with our portion, and ſtay for what his wiſedom will diſpenſe to us, and make a ſober uſe of it; and be ſo wiſe as to acknowledge him in all things, and to diſcern good from evill, and live vertuouſly in the enjoyment of him and of our ſelves, and give a reaſonable account of all our actions; one may well wonder what men would have

have God to ſay, if they call this a very heavy burthen. But what if he ſhould command us, with *Abraham*, to offer up an onely Son; or to feed all our life upon bread and water; or, with the Anchorets, dig our graves in the wilderneſs, and have no other tools but our nails to doe it? ſhould we not think it very hard; though we cannot ſay, as we may of the former, that it is impoſſible? And yet, comparatively ſpeaking, Heaven would be a great bargain after all this. What a purchace then is it, when he calls for no Sacrifice but that of our *own bodies*, which we are to preſent him holy, chaſt and pure, with true devotion and humility of ſpirit; together with the *ſacrifice of praiſe* continually; *giving thanks unto him* for all his benefits; and not *forgetting to doe good, and to communicate*; which are all *reaſonable ſervices*, and *ſacrifices with which God is well pleaſed*? xii. *Rom.* 1. xiii. *Heb.* 15, 16. At what lower rate can Eternall life be ſet then this, that we will not be unreaſonable? When will we be pleaſed, if it will not ſatisfie us to know that God will give us Eternall life, provided we will live ſoberly, and be gratefull to him who is the giver of all good things, and doe to others

others as we would that they ſhould doe to us? Is God beholden to us, when we accept of theſe terms of Salvation? They that imagine this too great a mortification, and that they doe ſome mighty matter when they take this courſe to go to heaven, muſt mortifie that conceit, or it is not likely they will come thither.

2. But let us proceed, to conſider what it is we muſt deny and ſuffer to attain this Felicity; and ſee to what the reckoning will come. If we put our ſins into the number of thoſe things we muſt forſake; it is apparent already, it would be a trouble to keep them. We are required indeed to *crucifie the fleſh*; which ſeems an hard ſaying. But when we have enquired the meaning of it, there is no ſeverity to be found in it. For it doth not oblige us to deſtroy, or ſo much as to impair, any faculty belonging to us: neither to weaken the Underſtanding, nor dull the Apprehenſion, nor overload the Memory; no nor conſume our ſpirits, nor deform our bodies, nor prejudice our healths, nor ſpoil our beauty, or any thing elſe that God hath made. There is no true pleaſure of which he deprives us; unleſs it be ſometimes for a better and more excellent

excellent end. He onely abridges our unjuſt liberty, and limits the hurtfull exceſſes of our deſires and paſſions; which we are not to gratifie againſt our reaſon, to the injury of our ſelves or our neighbours, and to the indangering the loſs of ſome better good. In brief, He allows us to pleaſe our ſelves, ſo that every part of us be pleaſed; our Judgment and Conſcience, as well as the lower Appetites. And what now doth all this amount unto, but the doing our ſelves a reall and intire kindneſs?

But in ſome ſtate of things God will have us forſake all our worldly goods and poſſeſſions, for the kingdom of heaven's ſake; as he required the Apoſtles and the firſt Diſciples to Chriſtianity. True. But do we not ſet too high a price upon theſe things, if we value our obedience at a great rate, upon this account? I will let alone the compariſon we ought to make between our loſs and our gain. Weigh things impartially by themſelves, and conſider what it is we part withall; ſhould we ſuffer all our worldly goods to be taken from us, rather then part with our Religion. Do we loſe any more then a Philoſopher hath left of his own

own accord, for the convenience of his ſtudy; and that he might not be incumbred in his contemplations? And while we had them, were all thoſe things neceſſary for us? Doth Nature require ſo much? Did not a great many of them lie by us unuſed? What a ſmall matter now does the account come to, when we have made this abatement? And how little reaſon is there, that the parting with theſe things ſhould make ſuch a noiſe, as if we had made ſome exceeding rich preſent to God's almighty love, from whom we received them?

But let us look upon them again, together with the loſs of life; and conſider, Are they things which we could have kept very long? Do we any more then part with them a little before the time? And what difference is there between their leaving us, and our leaving them; but the advantage we have, by living a while after them, to give a proof of a little very ſhort patience, and of intire truſt in God, and abſolute reſignation to his will? Let the things we leave for God's ſake be rated as high as we pleaſe, all that can be made of them comes at laſt to this; that, in obedience to God, we

we let them go a little before we could not enjoy them. And ſuppoſe we be required to die; it is but to go another way out of the world, then we muſt ſhortly, perhaps preſently, have done. There is no difference at all, but onely as much as there is between a ſword, and an acute diſeaſe; between the flames of fire, and thoſe of a burning fever.

But we may endure many torments, perhaps, in the world before we die; which are worſe then death it ſelf. It may be ſo; and there is a poſſibility, it may not be ſo. Now ſuppoſing we do not ſuffer any torments, what a ſmall matter is it that God asks, that we may go to Heaven? where we ſhall have an Happineſs ſo great, that we may well, *if need be*, (as St. *Peter* ſpeaks,) conſent to endure ſomething that looks more like ſelfdeniall then any thing I have mentioned, to obtain it. And yet when that neceſſity comes, this will ariſe to no great expenſe. It is no more then we may naturally ſuffer by the ſtone, or the gout, or by ſome ſuch diſeaſe which may ſeize upon us; and not carry us to heaven neither. And it is likewiſe conſiderable, that wicked men many times take more pains,

pains, and endure a great deal more then this comes to, to go to hell. Do we not ſee what attendance their luſts require from them? and that they make proviſion for their ſatisfaction with much ſolicitude and trouble? Nay, do not their expences frequently run very high, to gratifie ſome worldly or fleſhly deſire? One man breaks his ſleep; another pines his body; a third conſumes his eſtate; a fourth nouriſhes loathſome and foul diſeaſes; a fifth breeds cruell and tormenting pains, which ſet him upon the rack; a ſixth ventures his life, and runs the hazzard of the gallows, or of a ſeverer death. And all ſinners contrive and plot and trouble their brains to find opportunities, and are often vexed with diſappointments, and as often put to ſhame, and always troubled with their deſires, till they meet with ſome ſatisfaction; and being never ſatisfied, are always troubled with their reſtleſs deſires.

Let all theſe things be conſidered ſoberly; and then tell me, whether God demands great things of us, to obtain Eternall Life: and doth not rather wonderfully oblige us, in accepting ſo graciouſly our poor ſervices; nay, carries us from

from the happineſs of doing his will here, to the happineſs of having it rewarded with a moſt glorious recompence in another world.

And caſt in this conſideration alſo, (which *Clemens Alexandrinus* * propounds to the Gentiles,) how much many men would be willing to give, if it were ſet at a price, to purchaſe everlaſting Salvation. And therefore what account can they give of their unwillingneſs to accept of that on ſuch eaſie terms, which cannot be bought with all the gold, if we had it, of the fabulous *Pactolus?* We may purchaſe this moſt precious Salvation, if we will, οἰκείῳ θησαυρῷ with our own Treaſure, which we have within our ſelves; *viz. Charity, and a lively Faith.* This is its juſt price, ſaith he, which God will gladly accept. For *we hope in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of the Faithfull.* But it cannot be obtained by any other means. For they that ſtick to this World as weeds do to the rocks in the ſea, ſlight immortality; and judge themſelves unworthy of the other World, which at ſo low a rate offered it ſelf to their Faith and Charity.

* *Admon. ad Gentes* p. 55.

But we have juſt reaſon to proceed a great deal farther then all this; and ſuppoſing a man could alway live here without the leaſt trouble, and in the fulleſt contentment that either his Soul or body can now enjoy, I ask again, *whether a man that believes the Goſpell would be willing to have his Eternall life in this World:* and not rather chuſe to go thither, where both Soul and body ſhall be ſo wonderfully improved, as to be capable of more ſolid, pure and durable pleaſures, then this Earth can ever afford. He that conſiders how weak humane Nature is in this ſtate, and how unable to entertain it ſelf long with any of thoſe things which pleaſe our ſenſes, will not take much time to reſolve this queſtion. Should we be furniſhed with the beſt delights that Nature can crave, in the moſt perfect health and vigorous ſtrength; ſtill we ſhould find either fulneſs and ſatiety, or laſſitude and wearineſs follow the enjoyment. This is a great part of man's vanity in his beſt Eſtate; that all his fruitions either ſuppoſe, or make, a conſumption of his ſpirits.

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And how ſhort our underſtandings are and will be while we apprehend by the brain, and are forced to ſpend ſo much time in ſerving our bodily neceſſities, we cannot but be ſenſible: and therefore ſhall always be poſſeſſed with deſires which cannot here be ſatisfied; and long to know thoſe things, of which, ſhould we ſtay never ſo many Ages here, we muſt remain ignorant. Who would not then, that hath any hopes in another world, freely conſent to a diſſolution, in order to a better conjunction of Soul and body, in a ſtate of greater ſtrength and ſpritelineſs to enjoy a fuller good; with greater conſtancy, without any wearineſs or dejection of appetite, with perfect ſatisfaction, and an eternall pleaſure in enjoying the ſame again?

And if we agree to this, judge then what reaſon there is to be exceeding ſolicitous to attain that heavenly Bliſs, which ſo inconceivably tranſcends all that we can fanſy to our ſelves, but are never like to enjoy, in this world. And judge again, how unworthy then this ſhort, this troubleſome life, which is but like a dream, full of diſtracted thoughts

and cares and fears, is, to come into any competition with that Eternall life which we expect. And once more, how mad they are, who prefer a brutall, wicked life, which mere rationall men have hiſſed out of the world; before that happy ſtate, which far exceeds even the life of innocence in a Paradiſe upon earth.

IV. And let us hence take occaſion to conſider again; if it be not deſirable alway to ſtay here on this Earth, *how far diſtant are they from the happineſs of the other World, who have their thoughts very rarely there?* What ſhall we think of ſuch careleſs believers, as love not to have their minds troubled with the thoughts of Death and of Eternall Life; with which they deſire to have as little acquaintance as may be, till they come thither? Are they afraid of believing it too ſtrongly, for fear it ſhould ſpoil all their earthly delights, and make them loſe the reliſh they have of bodily pleaſures; or hinder their buſineſs, and make them have no liſt to follow it? There is no danger of this: for a lively belief of the Life to come heightens all our other joys, by making them innocent; and furthers our affairs, by making us diligent, but not

not too ſolicitous. But ſome ſuch fancy poſſeſſes the hearts of men; who have no inclination to entertain any familiarity with Heaven, till they think they are ſhortly to leave this Earth. For if we deſire them to think often and ſeriouſly of Eternall Life, they return ſuch an Anſwer as *Antipater* made to a man that preſented him with a Book concerning Happineſs, Οὐ σχολάζω, *I am not at leiſure:* Tell me of this when I have nothing elſe to doe; now I have other more weighty imployments. This is the ſenſe of mens groſs negligence, and their ſeldom retiring to look up unto *Jeſus*. Who juſtly expected not onely that greater multitudes, upon the publiſhing of ſuch an incomparable glory and happineſs, ſhould become Religious; but that their Piety ſhould arrive to a greater height of Vertue, by perpetuall contemplation of it. Chriſtians, one would think, ſhould love Vertue more dearly, and be more intirely devoted to the ſtudy of it, now that it hath ſuch a dowry; then any Philoſophers ever were, who loved it for it ſelf, and thought it to be its own price and portion. And ſo they would, if they did not lay aſide all conſideration, and ſuffer the thoughts of Eternal Bliſs to ſlip out of their minds.

It is a saying among the *Jews*, that when God first created Man, his stature was so tall, that he reached from heaven to earth, and could grasp all this world in his arms, as a very little thing. But *post peccatum Deus eum minuit ad centum cubitos*; after he sinned, God took him down to the height of an hundred cubits. And still as men grew worse and worse, they sunk lower, till they dwindled away, as we see by our selves, almost to Nothing. The Morall of it is very true. And if the Christian Faith, like the breath of life wherewith God inspired Man at the first, did throughly possess and renew our Souls; we should grow up again to such an excellent pitch, as to be above all the Earth, and tread it under our feet. At the very entrance of it, we should be inflamed with a most vehement desire and hope to grow till we be above the heavens, and made associates with the Angels, and sit down with our Blessed Saviour in his Throne. And the lively hope of this will make us presently discharge our selves of all those evill affections, which have degraded us and sunk us so low, that many men can scarce be discerned from the brutes that perish.

periſh. They can ſpeak, indeed; but that too is ſo ſottiſhly unreaſonable, as it onely ſerves to proclaim into what a pitifull condition they are faln. Out of which nothing but the Chriſtian Faith can raiſe us; which delivered the Gentile world from their Idolatry, and purged their hearts, when they lay ἐν τῇ χύσει κακῶν, as *Origen* often ſpeaks, in the moſt confuſed mixture of all filthineſs and impurity. It retains its virtue ſtill, did we but inliven it by ſuch affectionate conſiderations as theſe. Which make us ſo aſhamed to continue wallowing in the mire, that they will not ſuffer us to content our ſelves with a mean degree of purity; *but as he which called us is holy*, ſo they preſs us to *be holy in all manner of converſation.* 1 *Pet.* i. 15.

V. And *can any man now imagine, there is no danger at all in reſiſting ſo mighty a motive as this, to all well-doing?* or that a man ſhall be no more miſerable after his neglect of ſuch great Salvation, then he would have been if no ſuch propoſall had been made to him? Where have thoſe men lived? what have they been thinking of all their days, into whoſe hearts ſuch a belief can enter, that Chriſtians may ſin

at as eaſy a rate as heathens? What? will deſpite done to ſuch aſtoniſhing love of God to men, as is manifeſted to us, not at all inflame the reckoning? Can a man ſee the Kingdom of Heaven ſet open before his eyes, and offered to him; and after he hath ſo contemned it, as to prefer a little of this World before it, be uſed as favourably in hell, as if he had never heard of it? What doth our Saviour mean then, when he ſaith, It ſhall be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* in the day of judgment, then for thoſe places where the Goſpell of God's grace was preached? This very thing will make the fire more devouring, to think for what poor pleaſures or gains they ſet at nought ſo ſtupendious a grace; and that withall they have loſt thoſe things for which they loſt Heaven. When they ſee how inconſiderable all their paſt delights were, it will make the madneſs ſeem greater, and the more diſtract and torment their inraged Minds, to think how dear they now pay for them. The miſerable Soul will then continually pour upon it ſelf the hotteſt and moſt ſcalding thoughts of its own groſs ſtupidity, and ſenſeleſs negligence. It will flame with anger and burning wrath againſt

gainſt it ſelf, for the frantick choice which it hath made. And rolling it ſelf in the fire of its own fretfull and impatient diſpleaſure, will take ſuch a furious revenge upon it ſelf, as to become its own dreadfull executioner. In this miſery it will lie frying for ever; *ſibique perpetuum pabulum ſubminiſtrabit*, and afford to it ſelf perpetuall fewell, to keep alive the boiling rage and fierce diſpleaſure it hath conceived againſt it ſelf. The ſtings thereof will be ſharper and more frequently returning, then any pain, which we are now ſenſible of, can repreſent. The flaſhes of Lightning are not ſo ſearching; and they will be as quick as the thoughts of a Spirit. And what the hideous and dolefull groans of a Spirit are, we cannot tell; eſpecially that lies under the load of this thought, that it might have been as happy as now it is miſerable.

You may take a review of what was ſaid in the beginning concerning ETERNALL LIFE, and by that make ſome judgment of the Miſery of thoſe who are ſo unhappy as to loſe it. They will be deprived of all that Bliſs which the Souls and bodies of the juſt ſhall injoy; and not

not be able to avoid the ſoreſt pains, which even from thence will neceſſarily ariſe. For the greater you can ſuppoſe their *knowledge of God* to be in the other World, (which is the *Life* of pious Souls,) ſo much the greater will their ſorrow and heavineſs be, to think that they have loſt the favour of the Creatour of the World, the Fountain of all Good. And when they behold the glory wherein the juſt appear with our Bleſſed Lord, this will be a new grief to them, and moſt miſerably afflict their hearts; whenſoever they think what praiſe is given to thoſe holy men whom they deſpiſed, in what glory they ſhine, and unto what dignity they are preferred; and on the other ſide conſider their own ſhame and reproach, and how vilely they lie under a perpetuall curſe, pronounced againſt them before Angels and men, by the Lord of all.

And it will increaſe the torment, to conſider that they are the cauſe of all this miſery, which they have drawn upon themſelves. Their negligence will come to mind, which gave no heed to the Divine illuminations. Their contumacy alſo, which reſiſted the Divine motions. Their horrid

horrid wickedneſs, into which they ran againſt the cries even of their own conſciences. And theſe conſiderations they will not be able to avoid, nor put off the thoughts of the greatneſs of their miſery. But they will ſtick cloſe to them, and perpetually ſting them; ſo that all their *Knowledge*, which is ſo comfortable to others, will breed in them the moſt exquiſite grief and ſorrow. This our Saviour means by *outer darkneſs*, into which they ſhall be caſt. From whence we may gueſs in what conditions their *Wills* and their Affections muſt needs be: in which there will be *no love of God* at all; nothing, that we can conceive, but *envy* at the glory of the bleſſed; *hatred* of themſelves, as the cauſe of all this miſchief; *vexation* of heart, to ſee how great it is; and *deſperation* of ſeeing it grow leſs.

But I ſhall purſue it no farther, becauſe it would take up too much room in this diſcourſe, which already begins to grow too big. I ſhall onely adde, that none knows what flames the breath of the Lord will kindle. The power of his anger is inconceivable; eſpecially when incenſed by the ſlighting of his love. And therefore what can we ſay of the dolours which

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the fire that never goes out, and the worm that never dies, when they meet together, will cauſe both in the Souls and bodies of ſuch contemptuous ſinners? Who will begin then to wiſh they had never been acquainted with the glad tidings of Salvation; that ſo they might have lain in ſome more private corner of the miſerable World, in a bed of ſofter and more gentle flames, and without that open diſgrace to which they will be expoſed. What an eaſe would they think it, if they might but have the favour to houl among the poor *Indians*, and ſhriek no louder then other wicked *Pagans*; and have no worſe Devills to laſh them then the leud *Mahometans*, who never had a thought of any thing higher then a fleſhly Paradiſe? And yet the Pagans themſelves thought their condition would be bad enough, if they lived impiouſly; and that it was impoſſible to eſcape a juſt puniſhment in another world. As appears, among a number of other records, from that diſcourſe I mentioned of *Gobryas*; who ſaith the firſt place men come into when they depart this life is Πεδίον ἀληθείας, *the Field of truth.* So called, becauſe there Judges ſit to examine how every one hath paſſed his life: and there is no way to evade

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their ſentence by ſubterfuges or lies, (as his words are,) but they will diſpoſe of all men with exact juſtice, according as they deſerve. What they had ſome dark fancy of, is now plainly and clearly revealed unto us; who are inſtructed, that *God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead.* xvii. *Act.* 31. And therefore we ought to be afraid of *treaſuring up unto our ſelves wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek for glory, honour and immortality, eternall life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, indignation and wrath; Tribulation and anguiſh upon every Soul of man that doeth evill, of the Jew* (we may ſay *Chriſtian*) *firſt, and alſo of the Gentile.* ii. *Romans* 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

VI. Conſider then, I beſeech you, once more, (which is all the queſtions I ſhall ask,) *what you are now reſolved to doe.* Will you

you put it to the venture, whether you be immortally happy or no? Is it true that *Jesus* lives, and is the Lord of all, and will give Eternall life to his servants, worth more then all the pains they can take for it; but which cannot be wone by trifling and careleſs endeavours; and yet offers it ſelf graciouſly to thoſe that will accept of it on moſt reaſonable terms, which we cannot refuſe without the greateſt diſreſpect to God and danger to our ſelves? Conſider then, I beſeech you, what is the wiſeſt courſe for him to take that believes all this, and doth not think we have been all this time diſcourſing of a fiction. Is every man that reads theſe things reſolved to become a new creature? and to ſay, as St. *Paul* did after he had ſeen our Saviour, *Lord, what wouldſt thou have me to doe?* or as the *Iſraelites*, who beheld no ſuch ſights as are ſet before our eyes, *All that the Lord our God ſpeaks to us, we will hear it and doe it?*

O that there were ſuch an heart, as it there follows, in every one of us, that we would mind theſe things, and no longer neglect ſuch great Salvation! For what will become of us, if, being thus convinced what we ought to doe, we ſhould

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put away this Bleſſedneſs from us, and *judge our ſelves unworthy of Eternall life?* God forbid that we ſhould be ſo wicked, and ſo miſerable. Shall ſuch glorious things, and ſo certain, be propoſed to us, and few or none regard them? A Kingdom, a Crown of glory lie before us, and we ſcornfully overlook it? Wo be to us, that the *Father* from heaven ſhould ſpeak ſo often and ſo loudly, and we not hearken to his voice! That the Eternall *Word* ſhould appear in glory, and we fools be taken more with fading beauties! That the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhould deſcend from heaven, and the Devill ſtill carry all before him! That the Lord *Jeſus* ſhould ſhed his precious *bloud* for us, and we not part with a vile affection! What is become of our wit? where do our Souls dwell? or what company have they kept, that they are grown ſo void of all reaſon? Or do they think themſelves ſo wiſe, that they have found ſomething better then God? ſomething more valuable then Eternall life, and more certain too? When did the World get it ſelf made ſo great a Good? On what day was it that it engaged hereafter to be more conſtant to its Friends? Where are the Witneſſes, and the Seal to this bond?

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Ah wretched fools that we are, to let our Souls be cheated ſo eaſily of ſuch an happineſs! or rather thus to impoſe upon our ſelves with ſuch weak and childiſh imaginations! Is any thing here grown ſo big, that we cannot ſee the diſproportion between it and Heaven? or is this World of ſuch grand concern to us, that we cannot be at leiſure to hear what our Saviour offers us? Have we no greater regard to theſe *Witneſſes*, then to ſuffer them to be baffled by every fleſhly reaſoning, though never ſo ſilly and inconſiderable? Let us bethink our ſelves a little better. Let us doe them ſo much right, as to examine them impartially; and then if they deſerve not belief, let the Devill and the World take all. But if they declare beyond all exception, that *Jeſus* is the Lord, and hath Eternall life, and will beſtow it on thoſe that obey him, let us not be ſo bold as to ſlight him any longer; but go and humbly tender our hearts to him, and give him thanks that he will accept them. Is his yoke, think you, uneaſy, and his burthen too great a load? What was the load then which he carried, when all our ſins were laid upon him? what a yoke was the

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Croſs it ſelf, and all the indignities that he ſuffered? And yet *for the joy that was ſet before him* (and which he hath now ſet before us) he endured all with admirable patience. And indeed what can be too hard for him, who knows he labours for an infinite reward? Do we not all part with things very deſirable, for a ſmall gain we are to get by the exchange? And how earneſt, how fierce are we to drive on ſuch a bargain? How contentedly can the tradeſman loſe his dinner on the market-day, rather then loſe a cuſtomer, by whom he hopes to gain a ſhilling? All the traffick in the world is carried on by giving one thing for another; and many times upon a little advantage. And therefore what makes us ſo unwilling to part with any thing in the world that God calls for, when he offers to give us goods of ineſtimable value in the room of it?

It is not a ſmall portion that he aſſures us in his love, but he ſays we ſhall *inherit all things*, and that for ever. When we have ſerved him threeſcore years and ten, (and who is there, alas! that ſerves him ſo much?) he doth not promiſe to ſettle on us an eſtate of ſo little as four-

ſcore or an hundred years, of incomparable happineſs in the next World; (though we count it no mean bargain here, to part with a Leaſe of 70 years for one of 80 that is of equall value;) but more then ſo many Ages, more then millions of lives, even an Eternall life with himſelf in the heavens. Is there not a vaſt difference? Is not the diſparity inconceivable between what we lay out, and what we receive; and between the bargains we are ſo greedy of here, and this happy exchange which God offers us? Why then is it neglected, as if it were too dear at the rates on which it is propoſed? Are we not willing to give ſo much for it? Or is not the ſecurity good which God gives us for thoſe heavenly poſſeſſions? Look over the Evidences again which we have examined, and you will be aſhamed to call them in queſtion. And if you be ſatisfied, it will be a greater ſhame not to purſue this gainfull purchace, with the ſame eagerneſs, care and diligence, that we do our ſeverall imployments in this world. We ought to account that day beſt ſpent, not wherein we have got the moſt money, but wherein we have made ſome conſiderable improvement in true wiſedom, and

and done ſome ſingular ſervice to our Lord *Jeſus*, who is our hope. And in all our externall affairs let us exerciſe ſuch juſtice, charity, thankfulneſs, and contented humility, that we may be able to ſay, if any body ask us what we are doing, *We work for Eternity.*

And that we may doe ſo, and not like *Eſau* ſell our inheritance for a meſs of pottage, (which will not be worth the tears it will coſt us in this world, if ever we reflect upon our folly,) let us often caſt our eyes upon this Happineſs, frequently meditate on the joy of our Lord, and ſtudy ſeriouſly thoſe holy Writings, wherein theſe precious promiſes are recorded. The *Jews* are ſo proud of their Law, (which hath no ſuch Jewels in it neither,) that they fanſy the Angels contended with *Moſes* about it; and would needs perſwade him that it belonged to them *. I am ſure St. *Peter* ſays, that thoſe heavenly Miniſters have ſo great a value for the Goſpell, that *they deſire to look into theſe things:* wondering that we Gentiles ſhould be made, not onely *fellow-citizens with the Saints*, but, equall to themſelves. They rejoyced when they heard the good news, that our Lord was

* *Pirke* Eliezer *Cap.* XLVI.

come down to men; and it ſeems he hath told us things beyond all their expectation. Shall not we then ſet a due eſteem upon them, and look into them, and conſider them, who have them ſo near unto us, and are ſo much concerned in them? Then it were better for us if we had no eyes, or if we lived in thoſe places where no ſuch things are to be ſeen: for none will be ſo miſerable, as they that might have been exceeding happy, and choſe to remain miſerable; and that when ſo few thoughts would have ſecured their happineſs. For there is no way to be undone, but onely by not believing, or not conſidering the Goſpell of God's grace. Secure but theſe two paſſages; and ſtrict piety will neceſſarily be our imployment, and Eternall Life our reward. No temptation will be ſtrong enough to make us neglect our work; and, I am ſure, *faithfull is he who hath promiſed*, and will not fail to pay us more then our wages.

VI.

And what now remains, but to put thoſe in mind who obediently believe in the Lord *Jeſus*, what cauſe they have to enter-

entertain themſelves beforehand with great joy, in the comfortable expectation of God's mercy in Him to Eternall life? Let all his true-hearted Diſciples, who hear his voice, and follow him, rejoyce; yea, let them be glad in him with exceeding joy. Let them ſay, O how great is the goodneſs of God! how rich are thoſe bleſſings which he hath laid up for them that love him! how exceeding great and precious are the promiſes he hath made them! Our calling in *Chriſt Jeſus*, how high is it! what is there nobler then his *kingdom and glory?* To which alſo he hath called us, *by glory and vertue.* Heaven and earth concur in the moſt glorious and powerfull manner to give us aſſurance, that it ſhall be well, exceeding well, with all thoſe that love the Lord *Jeſus* in ſincerity.

Why ſhould we ſuffer our ſelves then to be dejected at any accident in this world, which falls croſs to us? Shall *we* take pet when any thing troubles us, and let our ſpirits die within us, who have ſuch glorious hopes to live upon, and mightily ſupport us? *Jeſus* is alive: He is alive for evermore: And in him is Eternall life for all his followers. The *Fa-*

ther, the *Word*, the *Holy Ghoſt*, are come to comfort us with this joyfull news. The *Water*, the *Bloud*, and the *Spirit*, all ſay the ſame; and ask us why we are ſo ſad, when life and immortality is brought to light by the Goſpell. It is the deſire of the Lord *Jeſus*, that we would not mourn; as though he ſtill lay in his grave, and could doe nothing for us. He is certainly riſen, and gone into the heavens; where God *hath made him exceeding glad with his countenance.* And it will adde to his joy, if it be capable of increaſe, to ſee us *rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* And therefore let us doe him the honour, to glory in his holy Name: and let us ſay alway, *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for us.* 1 *Pet.* i. 3, 4.

We ought to ſay ſo with joyfull hearts, even when death it ſelf approaches; which of all other is the moſt frightfull Enemy of mankind, but is made our Friend

Friend *by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Goſpell.* 2 *Tim.* i. 10. Which hath *given us*, as the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, ſuch *everlaſting conſolation*, that it would be a great reproach to it to receive Death timorouſly; which Wiſe men, before our Saviour came, concluded might be, *for any thing they knew*, πάντων μέγιστον καὶ ἀγαθῶν, *the greateſt of all goods.* Our Lord aſſures us they were right in their conjectures; and hath made that certain, which *Socrates* (whoſe words thoſe are) left doubtfull. And therefore we ought not to leave the world, as if it were the greateſt unhappineſs that could befall us. *It is for him onely to fear death* (as St. *Cyprian* ſpeaks*) *who would not go to Chriſt; and he onely hath reaſon to be unwilling to go to Chriſt, who doth not believe he ſhall begin to reign with him.* This is the onely thing (as he writes a little after) which makes men take death ſo heavily, *quia fides deeſt, becauſe Faith is wanting; becauſe they do not believe thoſe things are true, which He who is Truth it ſelf hath promiſed: But though they give credit to what a grave and laudable perſon promiſes, they are wavering about that which God*

Plato *Apolog. Socr.*

* *L. de Mortalitate*, p. 208.

saith, and receive it with an incredulous mind. For if they believed, they would entertain that which now seems dreadfull, as St. *Greg. Nazianzen** says that blessed Martyr did; whose Death he doubts whether he should call his departure from this life, or rather, πρὸς Θεὸν ἐκδημίαν, ἢ πόθου πλήρωσιν, *his departure to God, or the fulfilling of his desire.* And thus (if we may believe *Calcidius*) the famous *Trismegistus* died, saying to his Son that stood by him, *My Son, hitherto I have lived an exile from my country; but now I am going safe thither. And therefore when, a little while hence, I shall be freed from the chain of this body, see that you do not bewail me as if I was dead. For I am onely returning to that most excellent blessed City; whither the Citizens cannot arrive, unless they take death in their way. There God onely is the Governour in chief; who entertains his Citizens with a marvellous sweetness: in comparison with which, that which we now call Life, is rather to be termed Death.*

* *Orat.* xviii. p. 284.

Fr. Archangel. *Dogm. Cabalistica.*

And what if, in our passage to it, we should fall into divers temptations, or trialls of our sincere affection to the Lord *Jesus?* There is no reason that this should

ſhould diſhearten us, and deaden our ſpirits: For it is the ſingular privilege of a Chriſtian, to *rejoyce in the Lord alway*, (iv. *Phil.* 4.) eſpecially when he ſuffers for righteouſneſs ſake. In that caſe the Apoſtles thought it an honour, that they were *counted worthy* to be beaten, and *ſuffer ſhame for his Name.* v. *Act.* 41. And St. *James* thought their example was not unimitable by other Chriſtians, to whom he ſaith, i. 2. *My Brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations.* And ſo they did, as you reade in the Epiſtle to the Chriſtian *Hebrews*; of whom the Apoſtle gives this teſtimony, x. 34. *Ye took joyfully the ſpoiling of your goods, knowing in your ſelves, that you have in heaven a better and enduring ſubſtance.* This conſideration made them look upon the rapine, which the ſeditious people committed in their houſes, without that dejection which on ſuch occaſions appears in other countenances. And yet they were men like our ſelves, who *walked by faith, and not by ſight*; that is, did not enjoy the thing it ſelf which they expected. 2 *Cor.* v. 7. And therefore what ſhould hinder the ſame effect in our hearts, if we believe as they did?

And

And to ſhew the mighty power of this heavenly principle, theſe *three* things may be here pertinently noted, out of the records they have left us of their ſpirit in all their ſufferings.

I. And firſt, I find, that when the heavieſt croſs lay upon them, the ſenſe they had of things to come *ſupported* them under it with admirable reſolution. This was the leaſt effect of their holy Faith; which made them, when the hearts of others ſunk under the load, and fell down, as we ſay, into their knees, ſtand like a ſtrong pillar, which bears up the whole weight of the houſe, and never yield at all. The thoughts of what our Lord had promiſed, not onely preſerved them from murmuring and repining at their preſent condition, (knowing what good proviſion he had made for them hereafter,) but from fainting, and being ſluggiſh in their Miniſtry. *For which cauſe we faint not,* or do not grow lazy, ſaith St. *Paul:* (knowing, that is, that he who raiſed up the Lord *Jeſus*, would raiſe up them alſo:) *for though our outward man periſh,* (or wear away,) *yet the inward man is renewed* (or grows more

more youthfull) *day by day.* 2 *Cor.* iv. 14, 16. And (2.) this faith alſo preſerved them from ſwounding *fear*, either of diſgrace, or pain, or death; being *in nothing terrified by their adverſaries:* (ſaith the ſame Apoſtle i. *Phil.* 28.) who, ſeeing them undaunted under all their ſufferings, had reaſon to look upon this as *an evident token of their perdition*, and of the *Salvation* God would give to theſe his valiant Champions. And (3.) from ſorrowing alſo, and lamenting the loſs of any thing; becauſe this Good, they found, was ſtill ſecure. 2 *Cor.* vi. 10. Which made them, as he there ſaith again, to be always full of joy, though in the eye of the world they lookt very ſorrowfully. And ſo (*laſtly*) they kept their ſtedfaſtneſs, and turned not away from the holy commandment delivered unto them. Whereby they marvellouſly promoted Chriſtianity: *And the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternall glory by Chriſt Jeſus, after that they had ſuffered a while, made them perfect, ſtabliſhed, ſtrengthened, ſettled them.* 1 *Pet.* v. 10.

II. But the hope of Eternall life did not merely *ſupport* and uphold their ſpirits;

rits; it wonderfully *refreſhed and comforted* them in all their afflictions: ſo that they durſt confidently promiſe to all other ſuffering Chriſtians the ſame heavenly comforts from God. *Who comforteth us* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we our ſelves are comforted of God. And our hope of you is ſtedfaſt, knowing that as you are partakers of the ſufferings, ſo ſhall ye be alſo of the conſolation.* 2 *Cor.* i. 4, 7. Their comfort and rejoycing was, the teſtimony of their conſcience, that everywhere they acted ſincerely; (ver. 12.) and that they ſerved a good Maſter, who had promiſed them better fare in the next World, where he reigns in full power and glory. His Kingdom, they knew, was not of this World, even as he was not of the World; and therefore they did not expect he ſhould give them a portion of good things here. No; He told them plainly, *in the World ye ſhall have tribulation*; but adds in the ſame breath, *be of good chear, I have overcome the World.* xvi. *Joh.* 33.

III. Which victory of his over death and the grave incouraged them to follow him

him in all their tribulations, not merely with ſimple *comfort*, but with *joy*, as I have obſerved already; and more then that, made them *exceeding glad*, and even *ſhout for joy*. So our Saviour himſelf required them to doe, when they were reviled and perſecuted for his Name ſake. v. *Matt.* 12. *Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.* And ſo they did, as St. *Paul* tells us v. *Rom.* 2, 3. *We rejoyce in hope of the glory of God; and not onely ſo, but we glory in tribulations alſo.* For they had this *ſtrong conſolation*, as the Divine Writer to the *Hebrews* calls it; *Firſt*, that nothing, either in this World or the other, could take away that heavenly Good from them. As St. *Paul* alſo teſtifies in that triumph of his, viii. *Rom.* 38, 39. *I am perſwaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* When their goods were taken away, they could make their boaſt in *Chriſt*, and ſay, Our inheritance is immovable. When they were driven from houſe and home, (as we ſpeak,) they could triumph, and ſay,

ſay, *Our houſe is eternall in the heavens*, from which none can exclude us. When they were in pain, they ſtill remembred our Saviour's own words, *Your joy ſhall no man take from you.* In death it ſelf they could glory, and ſay, *Jeſus, our Life*, dies not; and *becauſe he lives, we ſhall live alſo.* And (2.) as they knew they could not loſe their future Happineſs, ſo they knew it to be incomparably greater then all their ſufferings. viii. *Rom.* 18. *For I reckon, that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.* 2 *Cor.* iv. 17. Where there is a *Third* Reaſon of their exceeding great joy; becauſe theſe afflictions, which they endured for *Chriſt*'s ſake, would increaſe their glory hereafter, and make their crown beyond all expreſſion heavier. And more then that, (4.) hereby not onely their preſent afflictions were alleviated and ſeemed triviall; but they gave them a clearer ſight of that moſt excellent glory beforehand: *while they looked not* (as it there follows ver. 18.) *at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen.* The removall of

of theſe things here below from before their eyes, fixed them more ſtedfaſtly on the inviſible World. Now *their joy was full*, as our Saviour ſpeaks xvi. *Joh.* 24. now it overflowed; when all things elſe had forſaken them, and nothing elſe but thoſe unſeen enjoyments remained to comfort them. This heavenly glory ſhone brighteſt in the dark and horrible pit: where their afflictions brought them ſweeter contentment, then ever was the fruit of any earthly pleaſure. And ſo we may ſtill hope, that when other things, by any calamity in this world, ſtand afar off, and can doe nothing for us; there will be the more room for the thoughts and ſenſe of this future bliſs, to ſpread it ſelf, and fill the whole capacity of pious hearts. Then they will be moſt at leiſure; then inviſible things will ſeem moſt reall; then they will moſt ſtrongly affect the heart: ſo that they will not be the worſe for their afflictions, but the better; and their pains will but bring them the ſooner to heavenly joys.

And ſhould not our Faith work thus mightily in our hearts, at leaſt ſupporting us with true ſatisfaction under all our troubles, it would be an exceeding great ſhame

ſhame to us: when we conſider with what reſolution, courage and chearfulneſs, they, whoſe knowledge of heavenly things was darker then ours, received the moſt dreadfull ſufferings, even death it ſelf, before the coming of our Saviour. The Mother and her ſeven Sons, whoſe ſtory is recorded in the ſecond Book of the *Maccabees*, Chap. vii. are a famous inſtance of this; who in hope of a bleſſed Reſurrection, when the belief of it ſtood on a feebler foundation then ours, offered themſelves to the ſharpeſt torments, rather then break the Law of their Creatour. "Neither the Strapado, nor the "Wheel to rack their joynts, nor Hooks "of iron to tear their fleſh, nor the fury "of wild Beaſts, nor boiling Caldrons, "nor the fierceſt Fires, no evill preſent, "no evill to come, could move the hearts "of theſe young men, who were in their "flouriſhing years; or make them yield "a jot to the wicked tyrant, who would "have had them tranſgreſs the Ordinances of *Moſes*. They are the words of that great man, St. *Gregory Nazianzen*; who hath admirably ſummed up their ſpeeches, in an Oration of his which he made in their commendation: where he proceeds in this manner. "One of the

Orat. xxii. *ex Maxillaire*, p. 401, *&c.*

"Bre-

" Brethren ſpoke in one faſhion, and the
" reſt in another; according as the words
" of the Tyrant, or the order of their ſuf-
" ferings, gave occaſion. But to compriſe
" all in a little compaſs, this was the ſub-
" ſtance of what they ſaid. O King *An-*
" *tiochus*, and all you that are here pre-
" ſent, be it known unto you that we
" have one King, even *God Almighty*,
" from whom we come, and unto whom
" we muſt return. And we have one
" Law-giver, *Moſes*, whom we will ne-
" ver betray nor reproach; though ano-
" ther *Antiochus*, more fierce and ſevere
" then thou, ſhould threaten us. Μία
" ἀσφάλεια, τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ τήρησις· Our
" onely ſecurity is, to keep the command-
" ment; and not to break the law where-
" by we are guarded. Our onely glory
" is, for ſuch great things to deſpiſe all
" glory beſide. Our onely riches are, the
" hopes we have hereafter. Our onely
" fear, leſt we ſhould fear any thing
" more then God. With theſe reaſons
" we now come armed into the field of
" danger. We are but young, it is true,
" and this World is ſweet; our native
" Country, our Friends, our Kindred, our
" dear Companions, invite us to ſtay
" with them. But none of them are ſo

" ſweet as God, none ſo dear as thoſe
" very dangers, which we expoſe our
" ſelves unto for Vertue's ſake. Harbour
" no ſuch thoughts, we humbly beſeech
" you; for there is another World alſo
" which expects us, more lofty and du-
" rable by far then all that we behold in
" this. *Jeruſalem* that is above is our
" Country; which no *Antiochus* can be-
" ſiege, no power on earth can touch or
" indanger. All thoſe that are born of
" God, are our Kindred: the Prophets
" and Patriarchs our Friends, from whom
" we have received a pattern of piety.
" And our Companions are all thoſe who
" hazzard themſelves with us this day,
" and are our contemporaries in conſtant
" ſuffering. Heaven is more glorious
" then our Temple it ſelf: the Quire of
" Angels infinitely beyond our ſolemn
" Aſſemblies: And there is one great
" Myſtery, GOD himſelf, whom all our
" ſacred Myſteries here reſpect. And
" therefore ceaſe to make us any more
" offers and promiſes of little things,
" which are nothing worth. We love
" not thoſe ſhamefull honours, which we
" ſhall get by denying God. We were
" not bred to make ſuch unthrifty bar-
" gains; and cannot traffick with thee

" on

" on ſuch baſe and ignoble terms. And
" therefore ceaſe alſo to threaten us; or
" we can return more dreadfull threat-
" nings, which will reprove thy weak-
" neſs. For know that we have a fire,
" into which to throw our Perſecutours.
" Doſt thou think thou haſt to doe with
" Gentile people? Thoſe, it is true, thou
" haſt overcome: they have yielded to
" thy threatnings and power. And no
" wonder; for they did not fight for
" ſuch glorious things as we. They one-
" ly defended their cities and goods; but
" we defend the Law of the moſt High.
" Thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf now againſt the
" Tables writ with the finger of God;
" againſt the moſt holy and divine Ser-
" vice; againſt the Rites of our country,
" which reaſon and time have made ho-
" nourable; againſt ſeven Brethren, who
" are linkt together by one Soul; whom
" it is no ſuch mighty buſineſs to over-
" come, but to be worſted by them will
" be moſt ſhamefull. And be aſſured,
" we will ſet up ſeven Monuments of
" thy diſgrace: for we are the progeny
" and diſciples of thoſe who were led by
" a pillar of fire and a cloud; to whom
" the Sea parted it ſelf, and the Sun ſtood
" ſtill, and Bread rained down from hea-

" ven; and who triumphed over mighty
" kings, by prayer and lifting up their
" hands to heaven. And to ſay ſome-
" thing that comes within the compaſs of
" thy knowledge, we are bred up under
" *Eleazar*, whoſe fortitude and courage
" thou art not ignorant of. The Father
" led the way; the Sons follow him to
" the like combate. Therefore it is to
" no purpoſe, to adde any more threat-
" nings: we can ſuffer greater things
" then thoſe thou ſpeakeſt of. Οὐδὲν
" ἰσχυρότερον τῶν παίδων ἑτοίμων,
" *There are none more valiant then they*
" *that are ready to endure all things.* Why
" do you delay to begin your cruelty?
" what do you ſtay for, or expect? Do
" you think we may change our minds,
" and recant? No; we proteſt again
" and again, we will never eat impure
" fleſh: we will never break the Law of
" our God. Thou ſhalt ſooner turn to
" our Religion, then we to thine. Let
" hotter fires be kindled; let more rave-
" nous beaſts be brought forth; let more
" exquiſite torments be invented: in
" ſhort, either deviſe ſome new puniſh-
" ment, or know that we deſpiſe theſe
" that are before us.

Theſe,

Theſe, ſaith he, were their words to the Tyrant; in the relation of which I am wonderfully delighted. And then embracing and kiſſing one another, with no leſs chearfulneſs then if they had been come to receive their reward, "Let us "go, ſaid they with a loud voice, let us "go to meet theſe dangers. Let us make "haſte, while the Tyrant is hot and "chafes; leſt he cool again, and we loſe "the Salvation. What though it coſt us "our lives? muſt not we leave them "ſome time or other? muſt we not pay "the debt we owe to Nature? Let us "convert then a neceſſity, into our choice "and a glory. Let us deceive the grave; "and make that peculiar, which is com-"mon. By death, let us make a purchace "of life. Let none of us faint in our un-"dertaking, nor be deſirous to live here "any longer. Let us make the Tyrant "deſpair of moving others, by ſeeing our "conſtancy. Let him appoint our ſuf-"ferings, we will put an end to them. "Let us make it appear that, as we are "Brethren by birth, ſo we are in all "things elſe; not excepting death.

Such was the reſolution, ſaith he, of theſe men; who did not ſerve pleaſure, nor ſuffered themſelves to be governed by their paſſions: but purified their bodies and their ſpirits, and in this manner were tranſlated εἰς τὸν ἀπαθῆ ζωὴν, to that life which is incapable of any paſſion, and free from all the troubles and miſeries to which here we are expoſed. It would be too long to relate the ſpeech of the Mother; who likewiſe gave an illuſtrious teſtimony of her faith in God, and hath left a rare example, to all poſterity, of conſtancy and patience under the greateſt ſufferings. The Apoſtle himſelf hath perpetuated their Memory in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, and made it ſacred to all generations. Where it will ſtand to our great confuſion, if we ſhould not learn of thoſe who had ſo great a Faith, under ſo dark a revelation. What would not theſe perſons have done, ſaith the forenamed Father, if they had lived in our times; who were ſo courageous before the ſufferings of *Chriſt*, and the glory (I may adde) that followed after? If without example they behaved themſelves ſo undauntedly; what rare Souls would they have been with one; eſpecially

cially with the example of *Christ Jesus*? Such we ought to strive to be, not onely as they were, but as we conceive they would have been under our Master. *Strengthened*, I mean, as St. *Paul* speaks, *with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light.* i. *Col.* 11, 12. And so we shall, if the same spirit of faith be in us that was in them. For it tells us how *Jesus* went this way to heaven; and that if we overcome, we shall shine with him in his glory, and sit down with him in his throne, and inherit all things.

There need no more be said to encourage even those Christians who have been most delicately bred, or that are of the tenderer Sex, to wade through the greatest difficulties. Let them but look up unto *Jesus*, and He will inflame them with such ardent love, that they will be glad to follow him to his Cross, if they must go that way to come where He is. This moved *Dorotheus* and divers other Courtiers, (who, as *Eusebius* * reports, were βασιλικοὶ παῖδες, of the Emperour's Bed-

* *L.* viii. *Eccles. Histor. c.* 6.

Bedchamber, and in ſuch high favour, that they were no leſs beloved then if they had been the Emperour's own children,) to prefer the reproaches and pains of piety, and the new-deviſed deaths they were to ſuffer for its ſake, before all the glory and delights wherein they lived. And St. *Peter*, we are told by *Clemens Alexandrinus* *, ſeeing his own Wife led to death, rejoyced at the grace to which ſhe was called; thinking now ſhe was upon her return home. And chearfully exhorting her to proceed to the execution, he called her by her name, ſaying onely theſe few words, Μεμνῆσο τȣ̃ Κυρίȣ, REMEMBER THE LORD. That was ſufficient, he knew, to make her conſtant and courageous: *It being a faithfull ſaying*, (an undoubted principle of Chriſtianity, on which we may ever ſafely build,) *For if we be dead with him, we ſhall alſo live with him: if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him.* 2 *Tim.* ii. 11, 12. And it was no leſs ſtedfaſtly believed, that they who ſuffered with him ſhould alſo reign with him in a greater glory then others; as we heard before from St. *Paul*, who ſaith, their afflictions would work for them a moſt ponderous crown of glory. Nay, they

* L. vii. *Stromat.* p. 756.

they gave the like encouragement to all thoſe who did any eminent ſervice to our Bleſſed Lord. They that *laboured hard*, for inſtance, *in the Word and Doctrine*, St. *Paul* ſaith, *were worthy of double honour*, or reward, in this World. 1 *Tim.* v. 17. Which few receiving, (but quite contrary, they were leaſt eſteemed, as he himſelf found by experience, who took the moſt pains,) there was the greater reaſon to hope to find it in another life: when the *chief Shepherd appearing*, they were ſure to receive *an excellent crown of glory.* 1 *Pet.* v. 4. To every Saint our Lord promiſes a *crown of glory:* (as thoſe crowns were wont to be called, that they uſed in times of greateſt joy:) the word ἀμαράντινον added to it (which is never uſed in any other place of Scripture, and is that whereby ſome of the crowns given to perſons of deſert in other Nations are called,) denotes, I think, ſomething extraordinary in the glory of thoſe good Shepherds, who fed the flock of God according to the directions the Apoſtle had been giving them.

The *Martyrs*, we are ſure, expected it; who building on this foundation, that

that they *who ſuffer with him, ſhall reign with him*, gave God thanks when they received the ſentence of death; and went to the execution ſinging; and expired with hymns in their mouths; and exhorted others, in the midſt of their torments, to the like chearfull conſtancy. Of all which I could produce inſtances out of the Eccleſiaſticall ſtory; but I ſhall onely ſet down that of *Liberatus* and his Monks. Who defending the Chriſtian Faith againſt the Hereſy of *Arius*, when they were condemned to be thrown bound into a ſhip full of faggots, and there to be burnt in the midſt of the Sea, ſang aloud this hymn; *Glory be to God in the higheſt. Behold, now is the acceptable time: Behold, now is the day of Salvation; in which we ſuffer puniſhment for the faith of our God.*

Victor Uticenſis *L.* iv. *Vandal. Perſec.*

And why ſhould not this faith, much more eaſily, comfort us againſt the death of our deareſt Friends; when we can reaſonably hope they depart from us, to go into the eternall Happineſs of a better World? Their gain is ſo great, which they have made by the exchange, that we ought not ſo heavily, as we are wont, to take our own loſs. This *Photius* repreſents

preſents very handſomely to his Brother *Taraſius*; after he had ſaid a great many other things, to ſtop the tears that he ſhed immoderately for a daughter who was dead. "Suppoſe, ſaith he, thy Daugh- *Epiſt.* "ter ſhould appear to thee, and, taking *ccxxxii.* "thee by the hand, ſhould kiſs it with *p.* 352. "a chearfull and ſmiling countenance, ſay- "ing, My Father, why doſt thou afflict "thy ſelf in this manner? why doſt thou "bemoan me, as if I was gone to an e- "vill condition? My lot is faln unto "me in Paradiſe; a place moſt ſweet to "behold, and far ſweeter to enjoy: "μείζω δὲ πίστως ἁπάσης ἡ πεῖρα, but the "experiment exceeds all belief. Into "this the crooked Serpent cannot wind "himſelf, as he did into that of our Fore- "fathers; nor ſo much as whiſper any "of his deceitfull temptations. There "is none among us, but whoſe Mind is "impregnable, and cannot be overcome "by any artifice; nor can we deſire to "be gratified with any greater good. "For we are all of us wiſe, with the Di- "vine and heavenly wiſedom; and our "whole life is a continued magnificent "feſtivall, in the enjoyment of infinite "and unſpeakable goods. Splendidly "cloathed, we ſee God in a ſplendid "manner,

" manner, (as far as man can ſee him;)
" and raviſhed with his inexplicable, in-
" conceivable beauty, we rejoyce alway,
" and are never weary. Which abun-
" dant pleaſure is the very perfection of
" love; and the power of enjoying ac-
" companying love, begets that ineffable
" joy and exultation of ſpirit. So that
" now, while I converſe with thee, a
" moſt mighty love to thoſe things draws
" me away, and ſuffers me not to ex-
" pound the leaſt part of them. Thou,
" and my dear Mother, ſhall one day
" come thither; and then confeſs I have
" ſaid very little of ſuch great Goods;
" but accuſe thy ſelf very much for be-
" wailing me, who happily enjoy them.
" Therefore, my deareſt Father, let me
" go away with joy, and do not detain
" me any longer; leſt thou ſuffer a grea-
" ter loſs, and for that be more bitterly
" afflicted.

" If thy Daughter, I ſay, could after
" this or the like ſort ſpeak to thee,
" wouldſt thou not be aſhamed to con-
" tinue thy lamentations? and chuſe ra-
" ther, with joy to let her go away re-
" joycing? Conſider then, if upon a
" Child's ſaying ſuch things, we ſhould
" preſent-

" preſently grow better, and be of good " comfort; ſhall we, when our common " Creatour and Lord cries, *He that be-* " *lieveth in me, though he die, yet ſhall he* " *live*; and, *God hath prepared for them* " *that love him ſuch things as eye hath not* " *ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have they* " *entred into the heart of man*; be no- " thing better for ſuch joyfull tidings, " but, like infidels, go on ſtill to increaſe " our ſad lamentations?

We cannot anſwer this Queſtion any other way, but by ſilence; or rather, chearfull thankſgivings to God, who hath given us ſuch *everlaſting conſolation, and good hope through his grace*, as may well enable us to ſay in every other troubleſome condition, *Why art thou* thus *caſt down, O my Soul? why art thou diſquieted within me? Hope in God*, and rejoyce in his holy Name, who, thanks be to his goodneſs, giveth us the victory, through our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*. Let us ſhake hands with grief, ſadneſs and ſorrow; and leave them to thoſe who have no hope of Eternall Life. Let us make our boaſt in the Lord, and ſay *that He is good, for his mercy endureth for ever*. Come, my Soul, what is it that afflicts thee?

thee? Will not the thoughts of the joys of heaven give thee eaſe, nay perfectly cure thee? Will not a ſight of *Jeſus*, ſitting on the throne of his glory, revive thee? It is but a moment or two, and we ſhall be with him where he is. Let us have patience for a few days more of baniſhment from our heavenly country. Hold out, my Soul, for a ſhort pilgrimage, and we ſhall arrive at our promiſed inheritance. Shall we bemoan our ſelves thus miſerably, for whom our God hath made ſuch gracious proviſion? Shall we be weary, who want but a few ſteps, and we are at our eternall reſt? Behold, behold thy Saviour: Yonder he is: I ſee him ſhining in his celeſtiall glory. He looks upon me, methinks, and ſaith, Be of good chear, for I am preparing a place for thee.

Do we not forget, O my Soul, that *Jeſus* is ſo highly advanced; when we ſuffer our ſelves to be thus caſt down and ſadly dejected? Do we not reproach his memory, and, in effect, ſay too groſsly, He is dead, He is not riſen; who can chuſe but mourn and be ſorrowfull? For ſhame let us ſtay our tears, till the teſtimonies we have heard can be diſproved;

ved; till it appear that *Jeſus* is ſtill in his grave, and theſe are Six falſe *Witneſſes*, which ſtand up for him. But in the mean time let us rejoyce, that they never yet could be confuted; but have born down all the oppoſition of the World and the Devill for more then Sixteen hundred years, to the eternall honour of *Jeſus*.

O ſweet Name! why do we diſhonour it with four faces, and ſad countenances, and a melancholick life? If he live, ſure he will be as good as his word, that we ſhall live alſo. Let us never forget thoſe words of grace, *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.* And let us never remember them, but with new delight. Let it delight us to repeat them a thouſand times in a day. As long as we live, let us comfort our ſelves with this; Our Lord hath ſaid, *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.* Doth it not fill a Merchant's heart with joy, to hear that his Ship is arrived at a ſafe port; though many leagues from his own houſe? Doth not the Country-man look briſk when his Seed-time is good; though he muſt wait many weeks before he reap his deſired Harveſt? Let not us then be the onely lumpiſh inſenſible things,

things, who hear the joyfull news that *Jeſus* is alive, and ſafely arrived at our Father's houſe, where there are many Manſions. Let not us be ſo ſtupid as to be diſcontented, who have his word for it, that we ſhall live with him. But let us rejoyce, and ſay as the Pſalmiſt doth, (we have more reaſon for it,) *In God will I praiſe his word: in the Lord will I praiſe his word. In him have I put my truſt: I will not be afraid what man*, or any thing elſe, *can doe unto me.* *Jeſus* hath ſaid I ſhall live: I will depend on his word; and expect, after all my toſſings up and down in this troubleſome World, to land ſhortly in the Paradiſe of God.

Pſal. lvi. 10, 11.

Paradiſe! O that comfortable word! that ſweeteſt of all words! What ſhould we not have given to hear of any hopes of it, if God had not promiſed it? And ſhall we now make light account of it? God forbid. We will not ſigh at the thoughts of death it ſelf; ſeeing it is but the gate of Paradiſe. We will look upon it with a ſmile, and ſay it is welcome. We will tell it that it is a long-lookt-for friend; and bid it doe its office, and make way for our entrance into the place that

that *Jeſus* hath prepared for us. What though we have not much acquaintance with that World? what though it be a place where we never were; and from whence no Friend that is gone thither hath returned, to tell us what it is? *Jeſus* knew it very well, (that's enough;) elſe he would not have endured ſo much for it. He is perfectly acquainted with it; for from thence he came, and there he is. And therefore let us not be timorous, when we think of removing to a ſtrange country; but confidently rely on his knowledge more then our own. Let us remember the words of theſe *Witneſſes*, which ſay, *He is the Son of God, in whom is Eternall Life.* Let us truſt his judgment, who thought it more deſirable to go away, though upon a Croſs, then to ſtay here in the greateſt pleaſure. And ſince all theſe *Witneſſes* ſay, He is in heaven; let us reſolve that we will die looking up to him, and ſaying,

Lord, remember it is the will of the *Father*, that we ſhould have Everlaſting Life. *Thou* thy ſelf appeareds't to St. *Stephen*, and madeſt him confident thou wilt receive our Spirit. The *Holy Ghoſt*, which is the Spirit of Truth, ſaith thou

art glorified, and wilt glorifie us with thy ſelf. This thou haſt preached to us. This thy *Bloud* hath purchaſed for us. This thou didſt *riſe again* to prepare, againſt our coming to thee. This thy holy *Apoſtles* ſay thou ſenteſt them to publiſh to the World. This thou haſt made us believe, and wait for, and ſuffer for, and long to enjoy. O Deareſt Lord, and moſt mercifull Saviour, who art the *true and faithfull Witneſs*, though we miſerable ſinners deſerve to be denied, yet deny not thy ſelf: let not the price of thy precious Bloud be loſt; let not the Word of the Father, of the Holy Ghoſt, thine own Word, fail. If thou art not alive, I am content to periſh. But if thou art, as thou haſt perſwaded me; then I will not ceaſe to call upon thee: I will die with theſe words in my mouth, and be confident thou wilt hear me, LORD JESUS, RECEIVE MY SPIRIT.

Thus the bleſſed Martyr St. *Stephen* expired; looking up ſtedfaſtly unto *Jeſus, the Authour and Finiſher of our Faith*, who then appeared in glory to him. Whoſe example all the reſt of that Noble Army followed; triumphing over death,

death, in an assured hope of immortall life. Which they had not the least doubt of, it is manifest from hence, that (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* observes*) ἐν αὐταῖς τῶν πολάσεων ταῖς ἀκμαῖς εὐχαριστοῦσι τῷ Θεῷ, *in the very extremity of their torments they gave thanks to God*, who they knew would reward their fidelity; having in this very way consecrated *Jesus* to the highest Office, of being *the Finisher* or *Crowner of our Faith*. Therefore their heart was glad, and their glory rejoyced: And they sang chearfully, with the holy Psalmist, but with a far greater confidence; *God shall redeem my Soul from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me.* xlix. *Psal.* 15.

* L. vii. *Stromat.* p. 756.

And, O thou Lord, and Creatour of all things, especially of this thy Workmanship! O thou God, and Father of thy Men! O thou Lord of life and death! O thou benefactour of Souls, and dispenser of all good things! O thou who didst form all things, and in due time, thou best knowest how in the depth of thy wisedom and administration, wilt transform us, by that Divine Artificer, the WORD! *Receive me also hereafter, when thou seest*

Greg. Naz. Orat. x. in Cæsarium fratrem, p. 176.

most convenient; in the mean time governing me in this flesh, as long as it will be profitable. And receive me in thy fear, prepared, not disturbed, nor hanging back at the last day, and dragg'd by force from hence, (like the lovers of the World and the Flesh,) but chearfully and willingly, into that everlasting and blessed Life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Id. Orat. xlii. εἰς τὸ ἅγιον Πάσχα, p. 696.

And O thou WORD of God! thou Light! thou Life, and Wisedom and Power! (for I delight in all thy Names:) O thou Off-spring and Image of that great Mind! O intellectuall WORD, and visible Man, who upholdest all things by the word of thy power! May it now please thee to accept of this Book, (though not the first-fruits, yet the last perhaps that I may be able to offer thee,) both as a gratefull acknowledgment for all thy benefits, and an humble supplication that I may have no other troubles, beside the necessary, sacred ones of my Charge. Stop the fury of any disease which may seize on me; or thy sentence, if I be removed by thee. And if thou art pleased to grant me a dissolution according to my desire, and I be received into the Heavenly Tabernacles; there I hope to offer acceptable

table Sacrifices to thee, at thy holy Altar, O FATHER, and WORD, and HOLY GHOST: for to thee belongs all Glory, Honour, and Dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE END.

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